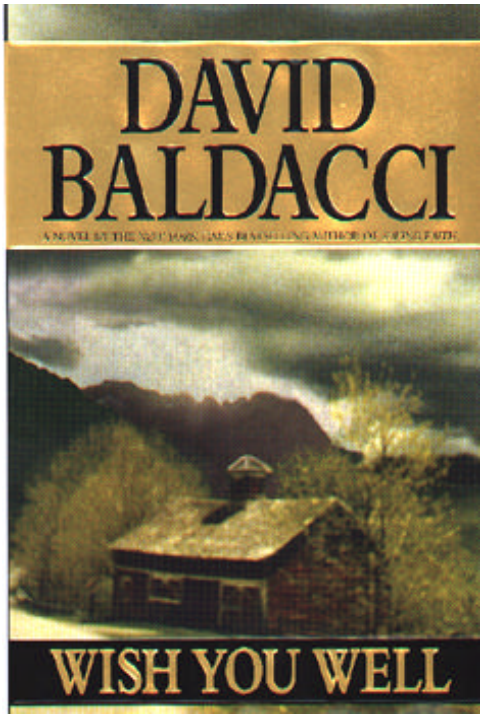
Secondary Reading Strategies

Applied to David Baldacci's Novel

WISH YOU WELL



Developed by

Office of Secondary Instructional Services

Virginia Department of Education

Richmond, Virginia

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Acknowledgments

Many of the secondary reading strategies included in the lesson plans presented here are adaptations of the work of Professor of Reading Dr. Kylene Beers, from the University of Houston. For the last twenty years, Dr. Beers has studied the reasons for and solutions to students' struggling with reading or being reluctant to read. Her mission is to map out strategies for teachers to use with both struggling and reluctant readers. Some of these strategies can be found in her *Reading Skills and Strategies: Reaching Reluctant Readers* published by Holt, Rinehart and Winston as part of the *Elements of Literature* series. The team of educators listed below adapted and applied many of Dr. Beers' secondary reading strategies to the novel *Wish You Well* by David Baldacci (New York: Warner Books, Inc., 2000), and they included many of their own reading strategies and activities as well. Special thanks go to Phyllis Ayers, who served as project director for the creation of this publication and the reading strategies workshops that were developed in conjunction with it.

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Foreword

When asked if she would be willing to write a foreword to this document, Dr. Kylene Beers enthusiastically agreed to explain how the intersection of reading skills and strategies complements the teaching of a novel such as David Baldacci's *Wish You Well*. The following is adapted from "Introduction: Reaching Struggling Readers: A Teacher's Journey to Understanding" from *Reading Strategies Handbook for High School: A Guide to Teaching Reading in the Literature Classroom* by Dr. Kylene Beers.

My journey from being a literature teacher to becoming a literature/reading teacher has made me wonder what part, if any, reading skills could play in my work. The word *skills* has become somewhat unpopular, implying that if you believe in skills, then your classroom is worksheet-driven, drill-laden, and certainly out-dated. But I can't let go of the fact that I not only believe in those things called reading skills, I myself, as a reader, really do *use* those skills. I see cause-and-effect relationships, I make inferences and generalizations, I predict, summarize, compare, and contrast. I went through school practicing such skills, and now, as an adult, I'm a good reader who likes to read. So how could I not believe in reading skills?

While I can't let go of belief in skills, I also can't deny the fact that I have seen more and more students who seem unable to do the skill exercises I give them. I slowly began to understand that for students who *can* generalize, analyze, make connections, make predictions, see causal relationships, and keep events in sequence, the worksheets in which they practice those skills are simply that — practice of something they can already do. But for students who *can't* do those things, the worksheets are just more opportunities for failure, not opportunities for learning.

So the question remained: How could I teach secondary students to read within the framework of a literature classroom? Skill practice wasn't the key, but abandoning skills wasn't it either. I began rethinking how I was teaching, studying the psychology of reading and the reading process, and delving into writings by specialists like Frank Smith, Louise Rosenblatt, Ken Goodman, Marie Clay, and Robert Probst. In my classroom, I stopped using worksheets that were actually just skill-practice sheets.

I made a list of what my district said were the reading skills students needed to master — things like comparing and contrasting, making predictions, drawing conclusions, forming inferences, determining the main idea, sequencing, forming opinions, finding cause and effect relationships, summarizing. Then I asked myself how I could teach a student who can't summarize to summarize. To answer that, I first had to understand just what kind of thinking students need to do in order to summarize. It seemed to me that, among other things, they need to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate. They have to be able to sequence. They have to compare and contrast.

Somewhere along the way I came to understand that *reading* skills are simply *thinking* skills applied to a reading situation. Is the problem that kids with reading difficulties really can't analyze, can't evaluate, can't classify? That they lack those thinking skills? Or can they not do those things *in a reading situation*? To find out, I began listening to students with reading difficulties talk, recording what they said to learn what type of thinking their talk revealed. As I listened, I saw what the skill-activity sheets weren't showing me: these students certainly can analyze, synthesize, and evaluate. They can compare and contrast and classify, and they can summarize an event, pulling out the main ideas. They can do the thinking. They just didn't yet know how to connect their thinking skills to a reading situation. They needed a strategy, a scaffold, which would provide the framework for the thinking they needed to do to read with certain skills.

I began trying out lots of strategies with students to see how strategies and skills intersect. I, like others, have found that teaching students strategies gives them a pathway for employing the thinking skills they possess but may not have yet been able to use readily in a reading context. Strategies help all learners. Skilled readers are, in part, skilled because they understand how to make sense of texts — how to do all those things we call reading skills without having to work overtly through a strategy. But less skilled readers need that overt action. Several different strategies can be used to teach one reading skill. For example, to help students make generalizations I use "Anticipation Guides," "It Says…I Say," "Most Important Word," or "Sketch to Stretch." When trying to decide what strategy to use with a certain student, I always ask myself how the strategy benefits the student. If the only benefit is that the student gets practice with a skill he or she already possesses, then I don't use the strategy. The point is to help students see that reading involves thinking and that strategies encourage that thinking to happen.

I soon discovered that finding strategies to provide scaffolds to reading skills was much easier than finding what motivated kids to want to read. Basically, students with a positive attitude toward reading see reading as a way to connect personally with a text. While reading may begin as a solitary act, it quickly becomes a way to interact with a group, to take part in discussions, to swap favorite stories, or to argue over themes. These readers want to choose their own books, become familiar with authors, go to the library, keep reading journals, and have small group discussions. They define reading as "a way to go to new places," "a way to be in another world," or "something that creates a movie in my mind."

Students with a negative attitude toward reading define reading very differently. They say that reading is "calling words," "saying words," or "just words on page." Few images are created by the words they read; few personal connections are forged. When they're asked what would motivate them to read, they're likely to first answer "nothing." But in reality, if you watch them closely, you will see some things that do motivate them. They still want to choose their own books, but from a narrow field. They don't know about authors, don't know genre, and don't know a library's layout. They see a library as "too big" and don't know "where any of the good books are." So, they need help in choosing books.

Struggling readers return year after year to classrooms where they look failure in the eye daily. Some secondary students don't return; they finally give up and drop out. Other students return, but in body only; they've built a wall around themselves, and apathy has become their middle name. But some struggling students return hopeful that this is the year that they'll finally "get it" and won't have to struggle any more. Hearing past their snide remarks or seeing past their blasé looks sometimes is a challenge. But adolescents who show up daily in classes are telling us with their presence that they are willing to learn. When that's the case, we've got to be willing and able to teach. For many of these students, you become their best chance at success. Therefore you need every tool possible to help them. Strategies that facilitate reading skills, such as the ones found in this document, are powerful tools. Struggling readers need them and deserve no less.

Dr. Kylene Beers
Professor of Reading
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Additional Teacher Resources

Introduction

The following introduction to secondary reading has been excerpted and adapted from the Reading to Learn section of the teacher resources included on the CD-ROM *NCS Mentor for Virginia* developed by the Virginia Department of Education.

Reading as a Process

Reading is a process that includes three phases: *before-reading*, *during-reading*, and *after-reading*. In the *before-reading* phase, the reader establishes in his mind a purpose and a plan for reading. He activates any prior knowledge or personal experiences he has that relate to the topic of the text. To activate this prior knowledge, the reader may, among other things, think to himself about what he knows, talk to a friend, participate in a brainstorming and/or mapping activity, which includes discussion, and make predictions about what will happen in the reading.

Now the reader begins to read the written text — the *during-reading* phase. While she reads, she will think about her purpose for reading and about her prior knowledge. This may occur during short pauses she takes. Throughout the actual reading of the text, the reader will be asking herself questions such as "Is it making sense?" and "Am I understanding what I'm reading?" This questioning is monitoring of comprehension. Not only must the reader monitor her comprehension to ensure success, but she must also have strategies to use when she does not understand. Strategies include simple ones such as rereading a sentence or paragraph or reading past an unknown word to use context clues to unlock the meaning.

The *after-reading* phase of the process occurs when the reader finishes reading the written text. The reader takes time to think about what he knew before the reading and what he learned or what connections he made during the reading, and then he links this information together to build new knowledge. At this point the reader may talk to a friend, teacher, or parent or write about the material he read. He may deepen his understanding of the material even further by this interaction and, hopefully, will see that various new meanings or nuances of meanings can be discovered in this way. Readers construct meaning. It is the successful construction of meaning that is the goal of all reading comprehension.

An Example

Take a moment to read this piece from *Wish You Well* by David Baldacci and think about it:

> Jack's eyes were silver dollars of panic, his breath no longer coming up. As the car raced across the slick road and onto the dirt shoulder on the other side, Amanda lunged into the backseat.

As you read this, what thoughts came into your mind? What connection did you make when you read, "Jack's eyes were silver dollars of panic"? Did you think about a time when you seriously panicked while in a car? Have you ever been in a runaway car? If not, have you ever talked to someone who has? As you read this piece, you had to make inferences: What was Jack thinking? What was Amanda trying to do? What is going to happen to the car? What will happen to these people? You used the knowledge in your head and the information in the text. These sentences from Baldacci's novel are very possibly about a serious car accident, but you must construct much of the meaning yourself. In reading, this is what always happens to some extent.

A reading process is not a linear sequence of steps; rather, it is a recursive process. In this situation, *recursive* means that readers may jump from one stage of the process to another stage of the process to another stage and then back again to the original. For example, readers read a piece of text (during-reading) and then try to answer a series of questions about what they have read (after-reading). If they discover that they do not know all the answers, they then go back to the text and reread (during-reading). Students need to be aware of, understand, and be in charge of their own reading process.

Activities That Support a Reading Process

The chart that follows gives some examples of specific activities that may facilitate or occur during one of the three phases of a recursive reading process.

BEFORE READING

- **Set** purpose.
- **Make** a plan.
- **Activate** prior knowledge:
  - **Brainstorm**.
  - **Map/web/cluster**.
  - **Discuss** in small group.
  - **Think** about what I know.
- **Make** predictions.
- **Preview** material.
- **THINK**.

DURING READING

- **Read**.
- **Pause and think** about what I'm reading.
- **Adjust** my reading rate.
- **Monitor** my comprehension:
  - Reread.
  - Look for key words.
  - Take notes.
  - Talk to a friend.
  - Talk aloud to myself.
- **Pause and check** predictions.
- **Make** new predictions.
- **Ask** questions of myself.
  - Does this make sense?
  - Do I understand what I'm reading?
- **Pause and summarize** in my head what I'm reading.
- **Visualize**.
- **THINK**.

AFTER READING

- **Pause and think** about what I knew before I read, what I learned during the reading, or what connections I made; try to create a new framework of knowledge.
- **Participate** in discussion.
- **Create** a graphic representation of what I read.
- **Retell** the story.
- **Summarize** the piece.
- **Search out** the answers to unanswered questions.
- **Write** about what I read; try to "say it in my own words."
- **Share** my interpretation of what I read with a peer or small group.
- **THINK**.

These are only a few of the activities that will support a reading process. Remember, it is a recursive process.

A Portrait of an Adolescent Reader

A proficient adolescent reader in grades 6–12 shows evidence of the following:

Before Reading…

- Setting a purpose for reading
- Establishing conceptual frameworks to recall text over time
- Activating background knowledge of the topic
- Using knowledge of text structure to understand text
- Understanding the features of narrative text:
  - characters
  - setting
  - problem
  - plot
  - resolution
- Understanding the features of expository text:
  - compare / contrast
  - problem / solution
  - cause / effect
  - main idea / details
  - sequences

During Reading…

- Reading actively for a purpose
- Monitoring comprehension
- Discriminating between important and less important ideas
- Using an arsenal of "fix-up" strategies
- Making connections to text / world / self
- Differentiating between an author's purpose for writing and a teacher's purpose for reading
- Identifying unfamiliar vocabulary, using context clues and word-attack skills
- Reading flexibly by using a variety of strategies such as pacing adjustment, skimming, and scanning
- Interacting with text by questioning, predicting, and extending
- Interpreting a variety of symbols across subject areas
- Utilizing critical reading skills, such as evaluating, interpreting and analyzing, recognizing the difference between fact and opinion, and recognizing logical fallacies

After Reading…

- Synthesizing information from a variety of sources to develop an understanding and thinking about next steps ("What else do I need to know?")
- Summarizing what has been read by retelling the plot or main idea
- Evaluating the ideas in the text

And Over Time…

- Reading and interpreting data
- Reading a variety of genres
- Choosing to read and interacting with others about his or her reading
- Developing and extending oral and written responses to his or her reading
- Using reading to solve problems in life and on the job

What Should Teachers Do To Improve Students' Reading Comprehension?

The goal of reading instruction is comprehension of written materials. Comprehension will enable students to acquire information through reading, relate new information to previous knowledge, and think differently and more clearly about the topic.

When teaching comprehension, teachers should be sure they always include three critical steps to facilitate and enable students to learn. First, teachers should always *model* for students a behavior (or strategy or skill). Next they should provide numerous opportunities for students to *apply* the behavior to real tasks and then talk about how the behavior worked or didn't work. Finally, teachers should require students to take *responsibility* for the behavior. This is a strategic teaching process that supports the gradual transfer of power and responsibility from the teacher to the student.

This process requires the teacher to be a skilled observer who knows when to teach specific strategies, how to teach them, how to provide for student differences, and how to learn through observation of what students do. It requires the teacher to facilitate learning by students and to provide many opportunities for them to practice strategies in real academic and social contexts. This process should be used in grades K–12 when appropriate and should include the following principles:

1. Show students how to grasp and set purposes.

The determination of a purpose plays a major role in planning how to read written text: different purposes require different plans. Purposes for reading can be determined directly and indirectly by the teacher and/or by the student. The text will also play a major role in determining the purpose and accompanying plan the student develops. Purposes are most often set during the before stage of the reading process but can be altered later if necessary. Purpose can be characterized by two questions: Why am I going to read this? What do I expect to learn by reading this? Purposes range from the personal pleasure of leisure-time reading to "I heard about this and want to know more about it," to "The teacher assigned this chapter in the textbook to be read for discussion."

2. Demonstrate frequently by modeling the checking of one's own degree of comprehension.

Checking one's own comprehension is often referred to as *monitoring*. Monitoring involves at least three components: a conscious effort (which with time and practice becomes more and more subconscious) by the reader to focus on whether he is or is not understanding written text, the ability to use strategies to correct the situation if he is not understanding the text, and the discipline to pause during reading to stop and think about the meaning of the material. Monitoring strategies include asking questions of oneself such as "Does this make sense? Do I understand what I'm reading? Are my predictions correct? Do I need to read the next paragraph(s) to understand the meaning of a difficult term? Do I need to stop during the reading and summarize or retell it to myself or write a summary?"

3. Demonstrate specific comprehension strategies.

Teachers need to *model overtly* for students the use of strategies in dealing with the texts used in class. Not only do teachers need to model how to use a strategy, but they also need to

share their thinking aloud as they apply the strategy. Some strategies will need to be modeled many times in a variety of types of texts, while other strategies will need only a few repetitions. Some students will require only a few demonstrations, while others may require more opportunities to observe and talk about how to use the strategies. Students can also be used as peer teachers and models. Teachers should give students opportunities to talk about the strategies they use — why they are effective and how they have adapted them.

Because students need to build a repertoire of strategies that they can use and are able to talk about, teachers should model a wide range of strategies. Students will develop preferences for some strategies and may even choose to adapt them. Teacher modeling of strategies needs to be an on-going event because students will learn and develop different levels of understanding over a period of time. Students need to be reminded that everyone uses strategies as they read, no matter what their age or competence level.

4. Give students guided experiences with different types of text.

Knowledge of different types of text — their structure and format features — can be very helpful to students as they learn how to learn from a wide variety of written materials. The written materials should range from newspapers to magazines, charts, graphs, maps, textbooks, dictionaries, encyclopedias — the list goes on and on. Features in textbooks such as indexes of different types, appendices, glossaries, question sections, and graphic organizers can all provide important information to the student who knows how to use them. Instruction in typical patterns found in texts such as cause-effect, sequence, and compare-contrast should be provided.

Teachers in all subject areas need to model for their students how to learn from their particular textbook. They need to provide many opportunities for students to practice these strategies, offering guidance when needed. Again, students and teachers need to share their thinking processes aloud with each other frequently as they read. Then students need to take increasing responsibility for use of strategies when reading.

5. Help students activate prior knowledge and apply it.

Everyone has a wealth of prior knowledge on a variety of subjects stored in his or her brain. The prior knowledge that everyone possesses is unique to that person, for it has been shaped and colored by that person's life experiences, both direct and vicarious. Why is prior knowledge so important to reading comprehension? Because it is the basis or framework upon which further understanding of information can occur. Think for a moment about what you know about cosmology. Then imagine finding yourself in a class about cosmology. Will it be easy or hard for you to learn and understand cosmology? For most people the answer is that it will be difficult to learn about it because of little or no prior knowledge about the topic. It's as if it's hard to know where to start learning so you can make sense of it all. The same is true for students as they delve into history, physics, chemistry, economics, and other subjects.

So the teacher starts by finding out what students know or think they know about a topic. This can be done through a variety of methods such as brainstorming, mapping, webbing, clustering, discussion, and listing. Awareness of what a student knows will also help him or her set a purpose and make a plan. When prior knowledge is activated in small groups, students often discover that they each know only a little about a topic, but collectively they know a great deal.

It is not good enough just to activate prior knowledge, though; it must then be applied to the written material. It is only at that point that the activated prior knowledge begins to serve as a framework for learning about the topic. The teacher may facilitate the reading of the material by having students stop at key points and look back at what they thought they knew in comparison to the information in the actual text. These discussions can also help students explore relationships among ideas in the text. Teachers continually need to make students aware of the importance of activating and applying prior knowledge and then provide them with many opportunities to do this.

6. Help students learn to make reasonable, useful inferences.

Inferences are critical to reading comprehension. They are critical because it is practically impossible to read a piece of text without making inferences: to comprehend written material one *must* make inferences.

To make an inference, the reader does two things: he or she (1) uses key words in the text and information already known about the topic and then (2) brings these two types of information together to make an inference that goes beyond the information presented. Think for a moment about the difference between a fact and an inference. A fact is something that is clearly stated in the text, while an inference is something that one "reads between the lines." Read the following sentence and determine what the fact is and what inference you can draw.

Jimmy ate his spinach tonight!

The fact you find is that Jimmy ate his spinach, while the inference you draw is that Jimmy does not usually eat his spinach.

Inferences are essential to reading comprehension. Remember that as you read a piece of text, you could draw a wrong inference, and as you continue to read on in the text, you will probably find that things are not making sense. More than likely, you will then re-read and make a new and probably better inference.

When teaching students to make inferences, you might begin by having them make observations and then inferences based on the observed items. At this time, lead students into written texts where they first identify facts and then make inferences. Provide numerous opportunities for students to make inferences and to share their inferences with others and to explain how they arrived at the particular inferences.

7. Build prior understanding of key vocabulary.

Key vocabulary is the terminology critical to understanding information on a specific topic. Without understanding of these key terms, it will be difficult to build a conceptual framework for understanding the written material. When beginning a new topic of study, first explore and activate prior knowledge to find out what students already know about the topic. You may discover that students already have some understanding of the key vocabulary and topic. For instance, if you are beginning an eighth-grade unit on plants, *photosynthesis* is a key vocabulary term for this topic. To activate students' prior knowledge, have students brainstorm on the term, and then with the students' help map out the information. This activity also gives students the opportunity to think about and identify what they would like to learn about the topic.

When working with key vocabulary, always model for students and always share your thinking. When trying to identify the key vocabulary terms, begin by identifying the key concepts — these will often be the key vocabulary terms. As you help students build an understanding of these terms, always try to find a way to relate the new information to something they already know and understand. Remember that vocabulary is best learned and understood in a written context, so preteach only those few words essential to understanding. Students need many opportunities to participate in group activities where key vocabulary is identified within written text and then explicated, and then they need opportunities to practice this in small groups, with a peer, or on their own.

8. Demonstrate vocabulary comprehension strategies.

Teachers need to provide students with a variety of strategies to use when trying to understand new vocabulary. Demonstrations need to include a wide range of text types and cover a variety of subject areas. Teachers need to demonstrate to students that real understanding and ownership of a word takes time. Comprehension of a word grows as one fully experiences the word in the process of reading and thinking. Meeting and understanding a new vocabulary word may take several exposures and varied contexts for a student to begin to really take ownership. Teachers should model and encourage students to explain vocabulary in their own words after they've had numerous encounters with the word. Students need ample time to practice these strategies and they may discover that some work better in one context than in another.

9. Demonstrate ways to identify key ideas.

Teachers need to demonstrate strategies for students to use when trying to locate main ideas. Knowledge of how text is organized by the use of such things as headings, subheadings, and boldface type can provide important information to the student who knows how to use it. Graphic organizers such as maps, webs, and clusters can help students see how ideas relate to each other and their relative levels of importance. Model these techniques for students and provide many opportunities for students to create their own techniques and share them with the teacher and their peers. Teachers in every content area need to assume responsibility for helping students learn how to learn from the content area text they are using.

10. Emphasize the use of knowledge gained from reading.

It is not enough just to read and comprehend material; it is also essential to be able to use the new information with the old. Teachers must demonstrate for students the entire reading process so students can see how it facilitates their making meaning and the growth of their personal body of knowledge. Fairly equal emphasis needs to be given to each stage of the process so that students can see that all stages are essential. Teachers need to model and share their thoughts with students and help students see how their own knowledge has changed. By using charts, Venn diagrams, and other types of organizers, teachers can help students see how knowledge changes by comparing and contrasting information. By modeling the use of knowledge in a product such as a poster, story, poem, report, or play, teachers can emphasize to students how important it is to "say it in their own words."

What Must Students Be Able To Do To Comprehend Text?

1. Students must know the purpose of the text they are to read and their own purpose in reading it.

Establishing a purpose is very important to students. If a student is to read successfully, he or she needs to *establish* a purpose prior to the actual reading and to use the knowledge of that purpose in establishing his or her reading plan. Different purposes require different plans. Read the following three scenarios and think about the importance of setting a purpose:

(1) An eleventh-grade student is reading *Wish You Well* and knows that she will participate in several reading conferences throughout the reading process. Her purpose is to read a self-selected book (*Wish You Well*), to enjoy the reading, and to learn more about character development — something the teacher has told her she needs to focus on. Her plan, therefore, will include making frequent entries in her reading response log about character development, giving increased attention to areas where the writer really builds characterization, and maintaining an awareness throughout the reading that she will be creating some type of product focusing on characterization when she finishes the book.

(2) Contrast this example with another eleventh-grade student who has been assigned to read in a history textbook two chapters on the Revolutionary War. He knows that the class will be studying this topic for the next three weeks and that there will be pop quizzes during and a test at the end of the time. His purpose is to read to learn — to retain and understand information. Therefore, his plan will include skimming the material, reading and making notes on the material, and then rereading. Remember that in both instances the students can adjust their plans.

(3) Finally, in contrast to both of these instances, the third student is reading a book recommended by a friend. Her purpose is to read and enjoy the book, and her plan is to talk with her friend about the book as she reads it.

Purpose setting is important to successful reading. Students should participate in purpose-setting activities in all subject areas, be expected to set their own purposes, and eventually be able to justify and explain them.

2. Students must be aware, as they are reading, of how well they are comprehending.

Responsibility is an important component of successful reading. Students need to learn over a period of time to be responsible for monitoring their own comprehension. They will learn this from teacher's modeling of how she checks her own comprehension, as well as through actual practice with written text. Students can stop periodically throughout a piece of text and talk to themselves. This talking may include a variety of things, such as questions like "Is this making sense?", which summarizes in their heads what they have read so far, or making predictions about what comes next.

3. Students must improve their comprehension by using appropriate strategies.

Students need to have a repertoire of strategies that they *know*, *understand*, and can *apply*. Application includes *knowing when* to use a strategy and *knowing how* to use it effectively. Some of the strategies students should be exposed to are rereading, skimming, scanning, activating prior knowledge, summarizing, making predictions, making notes, purpose setting, and visualizing.

Besides being exposed to various strategies, students need many opportunities to apply strategies and then talk with others about why they chose a strategy and how it did or did not help them. They need to become increasingly responsible for application of strategies to ensure comprehension, and they need to seek help from peers or a teacher when a problem is encountered that cannot be solved using the strategies they know. When students select a strategy to solve a problem, they should try to select the one that will work best for that specific context. For example, scanning is a good strategy for previewing a new chapter in a social studies text but isn't very appropriate for assisting in understanding a paragraph when the student says to herself, "This isn't making sense."

4. Students must be familiar with the structures and formats of various types of common texts.

Knowledge of how and why text is organized in a particular manner is essential to students. It provides a framework from which the students can set a purpose and make a plan. Some texts are very considerate of the reader and some aren't; therefore, the reader needs to be aware of text features and have strategies he can apply in different situations.

Think for a moment about a typical eighth-grade mathematics text and an eighth-grade literature book. The formats, organization, patterns, and presentation styles differ vastly, yet the same student is expected to read and comprehend text in both. Students need many varied opportunities to observe teachers modeling how to approach texts in specific content areas.

Students need to participate in think-alongs with peers, where students share aloud their ways of coping with different types of text in various formats. Students also need to be aware of various text features that may assist them, such as glossaries, indexes, and appendices. They need to practice application of this knowledge not only in school textbooks, but also in reference books, magazines, newspapers, fiction, and nonfiction books.

5. Students must be aware of what they already know about the subject of the text and apply that knowledge during reading.

Before reading anything, the good reader activates what he or she already knows that seems to apply to that text. This information is called *prior knowledge*, and it includes both the reader's relevant experiences (direct and vicarious) and his or her sense of how language works. This sense of language, which is our subconscious understanding of how words in English tend to combine to form meaningful text, develops naturally through all our experiences with language. The more oral and written language that we experience in more contexts, the stronger our sense of language and our foundation of comprehension. Part of monitoring comprehension is our ability to evaluate the text against our sense of how text should work.

The other part of prior knowledge is the information stored in our brains, which we retrieve in language form in the form of schemas. These are individual systems in which clusters of related knowledge are structured logically or by association. Since information B is related to A and C, it is easier to remember (for example, any ordered sequence of numbers is easier to remember than any group of random numbers). It is also easier to understand new information (like that read in a book) if we already have something we can relate it to — a schema. When we sort through schemas and call up the ones that might be useful, we are activating prior knowledge without which every bit of new information we read will seem isolated and puzzling.

An example of a schema is the word *restaurants*. When someone says *restaurants*, many things come to mind almost instantaneously, and a maze of information becomes available. Now think about "an elegant restaurant"; your mind suddenly narrows and selects information, and for many people it paints a vivid mental picture that includes such things as expensive prices, a maitre d', well-dressed waiters and waitresses, reservations, exquisite surroundings, unusual dishes to eat, and certain codes of behavior. Now think for a moment about "a fast food restaurant." Your mind retrieves information such as standing in line, food such as hamburgers or chicken, cheap prices, Styrofoam containers, and quick service. It is this ability to store and retrieve sets of information effectively that allows us to think, act, and converse. It is the building of schema through networks of relationships between information that allows us to store information for long periods of time.

Students need to be aware that schemas exist and understand that by building relationships and connections between new information and old, they will be able to store and retrieve information more successfully.

6. Students must make reasonable inferences.

Inferences are vital to comprehension of written text. Students need to know what an inference is and how to go about making one. They need to be able to use key words found in the written text and in the information they already know about the topic and to bring this information together to make an inference. Students need to know the difference between a fact and an inference, and they need to be able to explain how they made the inference. As students read a piece of text, they can also often confirm or deny their inference by reading further; by gathering more information, they can discover if their inferences make sense. Students need many opportunities to make inferences and then to share their thinking with others.

7. Students must understand key vocabulary in the text.

Key vocabulary is critical to understanding the concepts and information essential to any subject area. Students need to have strategies to deal with key vocabulary. They need to be able to identify it and then build understanding of it through various strategies. Key vocabulary will help establish the framework upon which a student builds his or her understanding of a topic and will enable him or her to store and retrieve information.

Think for a moment about the term *reading* and imagine that you are a first grader. Ask five first graders "What is reading?" Their answers will vary from "It's stories" to "Workbooks." These students came up with their answers based on prior knowledge and experiences. As shown by the "workbooks" answer, early understandings or misunderstandings can be critical to future success in any subject area.

In the past, students were often instructed to simply look up a word and find its definition. But the context is critical to meaning of the word. If students understand and can *explain* key vocabulary, then they have a framework from which to learn.

8. Students must use strategies for understanding new vocabulary encountered.

When students encounter new vocabulary in text, they need to have a framework in which they can place the terms and relate them to what they already know. For example, science students are learning about the *heart* (key vocabulary term), which has been related to

their prior knowledge of a pump — it takes blood in and pumps blood out. Now the discussion leads to the four ventricles of the heart. *Ventricles* are defined as the chambers of the heart — which can be thought of as rooms in the heart — where specific functions occur. Students need to be able to build and find relationships between the words and concepts they are learning and be able to relate these words and concepts to similar things that are already understood. Students can use strategies such as mapping and webbing, diagrams, and drawing pictures to show the relationships among words, and they can write out their understanding of such relationships (or, in other words, try to "say it in my own words"). They can then share their information with peers and teachers, and misconceptions can be easily spotted. Through sharing, thinking can often be clarified.

9. Students must identify main ideas and the supporting information leading to them.

As they read, students need to develop an awareness of relationships among the ideas and information in the text. Finding a main idea is simply not good enough; students need to be able to justify and explain why a particular point is a main idea. By finding the relationships among ideas, they are able to identify supporting pieces of data and the overall topic. Mapping, webbing, and visual graphics can often make this information very clear and understandable for students. Students need many opportunities to create their own maps, webs, and graphic organizers and to share them with their peers.

10. Students must think differently and more clearly about the information presented in the text after reading.

Students who use a reading process of *before-*, *during-*, and *after-reading* will be better prepared to effectively use the information they knew before they read and the information they learned during their reading. Students must *use* the new knowledge if they are going to *learn* from the experience. They must relate it to past knowledge, expanding, clarifying, or re-picturing it to accommodate the new knowledge. One of the best ways to think in a different and clearer way about information is by "saying it in my own words" — by speaking or writing about it in one's own way. Then, and only then, will this knowledge become the learner's.

Finally, when students are capable of orchestrating all ten of these principles on their own, they will be able to comprehend successfully most written text. Teachers will then have achieved the goal of teaching students to be strategic, independent readers.

Before-Reading Strategies

Open House

Reading Skills

- Making predictions
- Making generalizations
- Making inferences
- Rereading

Correlation to the Virginia English Standards of Learning

7.1, 7.5, 7.6 • 8.1, 8.3, 8.4 • 9.3 • 10.9

Overview of the "Open House" Strategy

Strong readers automatically make predictions, inferences, and generalizations when they read. Reluctant readers do not come by these skills naturally, but they can be taught the skills by practicing. The "Open House" reading strategy (also known as the "Tea Party") gives the students an opportunity to talk to each other about segments of a short story, chapter, or poem and predict what will happen next. They will make inferences and generalizations about the characters, setting, mood / tone, plot / action, conflicts, and point of view by discussing the segments. Before starting this activity, discuss the characteristics of an open house, making sure the students understand that people are supposed to mingle, talk, and share information.

Activity for the "Open House" Strategy

Use this strategy with the first chapter of *Wish You Well* by following these steps:

1. Photocopy the first chapter of the novel, and cut the chapter into segments, one segment for each class member. If you have a large class, you may wish to have the class members work in pairs in order to keep the segments from being too short. (Permission granted by Warner Books, Inc. to reproduce and use excerpts from Wish You Well by David Baldacci for educational and / or classroom use.)
2. After mixing the segments, distribute the segments to the students.
3. Give the students a few minutes to read silently their given segments.
4. Distribute the "To Discover" sheets (see page 17).
5. Next, tell the students that they have 10 minutes to "meet and greet" as many "guests" in the room as possible. The idea is to create an open house atmosphere in which the students spend a minute or two with other students and share the information from the chapter as revealed in their given segment. Have the students record on their sheets what they discover from others.
6. After the open house, ask the students to return to their seats and take a few minutes to record additional questions, predictions, inferences, and generalizations related to the chapter. Ask for volunteers to share their discoveries, predictions, and questions. You may wish to compile and display the shared information on a chart, on an overhead transparency, or on the chalkboard.
7. Now, hand out the book, and ask the students to read Chapter 1.
8. After the students are finished, ask them to write down the differences between their predicted information and the actual information.
9. Follow up with a class discussion.

This activity works well with the first chapter of *Wish You Well*. It is also effective when used at a turning point in the middle or at the conclusion of the novel. This strategy works with nonfiction, such as reports and essays, poetry, and short stories. Customized "To Discover" pages will need to be created to match the objectives of the reading.

Assessment

Students may be assessed on participation in the mingling section of the "Open House" activity according to the following rubric:

- EXCELLENT participation (Score 4): The student meets with at least four other class members and fills in all boxes on his or her "To Discover" sheet.
- ABOVE AVERAGE participation (Score 3): The student meets with at least three other class members and fills in all but 1 or 2 boxes on his or her "To Discover" sheet.
- ADEQUATE participation (Score 2): The student meets with two other class members and fills in 4 or 5 boxes on the "To Discover" sheet.
- BELOW AVERAGE participation (Score 1): The student meets with one other class member and fills in 2 or 3 boxes on his or her "To Discover" sheet.
- NO participation (Score 0): The student does not meet with any class members and fills in 0 or 1 box on his or her "To Discover" sheet.

Blackline Master

Open House — To Discover...

Characters

Point of View

Setting

Mood/Tone

Plot/Action

Conflict(s)

I predict...

Probable Passage 1

Reading Skills

- Establishing a purpose for reading
- Making predictions
- Using prior knowledge
- Analyzing chronological order

Correlation to the Virginia English Standards of Learning

7.5, 7.6, 7.8 • 8.4, 8.5 • 9.3, 9.4, 9.6 • 10.3, 10.7 • 11.3 • 12.7

Overview of the "Probable Passage" Strategy

This strategy can be adapted for use prior to the students' reading any section of the novel. The lesson will give students practice in predicting what a passage will be about. They will also learn to activate prior knowledge when they approach a reading assignment. They will further develop their skill at monitoring their own reading comprehension and will develop their understanding of narrative conventions.

The teacher chooses a passage, analyzes it, and selects 10 to 15 important words and phrases from the passage that the students will need to understand. The teacher then constructs a "probable passage" that uses the selected words and summarizes/condenses some of the ideas in the actual passage. The teacher makes a fill-in-the-blanks version of the probable passage by deleting the selected words and phrases and replacing them with blanks. After discussing the list of key words with the students, the teacher asks them to insert the key words and phrases into the blanks. The students then compare their filled-in probable passages to the actual passage.

Activity for the "Probable Passage" Strategy

1. Before the students read chapter 30 of *Wish You Well*, present them with a list of key words. Review the words, and discuss the definitions of any that are unfamiliar (e.g., *fretted*, *lard*.) (See #1 on the blackline master on the next page.)
2. Ask students to arrange the words into categories on the chart provided. (See #2 on the blackline master.)
3. Distribute the probable passage from which the key words have been deleted, and ask the students to insert the words into the blanks. (See #3 on the blackline master. Note: You may wish to refer to the categories in your probable passage. However, since the passage is from chapter 30, the students should already be familiar with most of the ideas from having read chapters 1 through 29 and may not need such prompts.)
4. Ask the students to read their probable passages and discuss their choices.
5. Assign the reading of chapter 30.
6. Ask the students to compare their probable passages to the actual passage.

Blackline Master

Probable Passage 1 — *Wish You Well*, Chapter 30

1. Read and discuss the following list of key words and phrases:

canned in jars	nothing to eat
Eugene	buckets of potatoes
night	fretted
heavy wagon	bags of cornmeal
sharing	Billy Davis
Louisa	late summer
filled lard buckets with berries	harvested

2. Categorize each of the words in one of the columns in the chart below:

Setting	Characters	Actions	Objects

3. Probable Passage: Place the key words from your chart in the probable passage below. Change word categories at this point if you wish.

In _____ (time), food was abundant, and it was time for _____, _____, and the children to harvest their crops. They _____ they picked and made into jams and preserves. They shucked the corn and picked beans, tomatoes, and fruits. All this they _____ and stored under the stairs. Turnips, rutabagas, carrots, and potatoes were dug for winter storage. While Louisa and her family had plenty of food, they also thought of those who had _____. This included _____ and his family. One dark summer _____, Billy brought a wagon to Louisa's farm. Lou was surprised when her grandmother and Eugene began loading _____, _____, and all sorts of food into the wagon. Billy then drove the _____ home with food for his mother and his brothers and sisters. Lou learned that Louisa had been secretly _____ the food she _____ with the Davis family for many years. Louisa told her granddaughter that George Davis "never once _____ about where the bounty come from."

4. Read the first section of chapter 30 of *Wish You Well*. Briefly discuss the differences between the actual passage and your probable passage.

5. Suggested journal topic: Imagine that you are Lou, and describe how you would you feel if you learned that your grandmother had been giving food to George Davis's family.

Assessment

Use the following rubric to assess the students' work:

- ACCOMPLISHED: (Score 3): Can predict exactly what will happen in the actual text.
- DEVELOPING (Score 2): Can predict some of the events that will occur in the actual text.
- BEGINNING (Score 1): Cannot predict, based on the context clues, what will happen in the actual text.

Answer Key for the Preceding Probable Passage

In late summer (time), food was abundant, and it was time for Louisa, Eugene, and the children to harvest their crops. They filled lard buckets with berries they picked and made into jams and preserves. They shucked the corn and picked beans, tomatoes, and fruits. All this they canned in jars and stored under the stairs. Turnips, rutabagas, carrots, and potatoes were dug for winter storage. While Louisa and her family had plenty of food, they also thought of those who had nothing to eat. This included Billy Davis and his family. One dark summer night, Billy brought a wagon to Louisa's farm. Lou was surprised when her grandmother and Eugene began loading buckets of potatoes, bags of cornmeal, and all sorts of food into the wagon. Billy then drove the heavy wagon home with food for his mother and his brothers and sisters. Lou learned that Louisa had been secretly sharing the food she harvested with the Davis family for many years. Louisa told her granddaughter that George Davis "never once fretted about where the bounty come from."

Probable Passage 2

Reading Skills

- Establishing a purpose for reading
- Making predictions

Correlation to the Virginia English Standards of Learning

7.4 • 8.3 • 9.3 • 10.3 • 11.3 • 12.3

Overview of the "Probable Passage" Strategy

Students with little reading experience often want merely to read a passage in order to say that they are finished. They loathe taking the time necessary truly to comprehend a specific text. Moreover, they fail to think about what will happen in the text based on what they already know about it. The "Probable Passage" strategy enables students to stop and make predictions prior to reading as well as encourages students to reflect on what they have read.

Students will discuss the meanings of words, arrange these words in categories according to their functions in the excerpt, fill in the blanks of a probable passage, and then read the actual story to compare and contrast similarities and differences.

Activity for the "Probable Passage" Strategy

1. Tell students that they will use a strategy called "Probable Passage" to help them make predictions about selected texts.
2. Give students the blackline master (on the next page) with a list of words and phrases. Read each word or phrase aloud and discuss the meaning of each.
3. Have students characterize these words or phrases by listing them on a chart containing four categories: setting, characters, problem, and resolution. Once the students are finished, discuss this chart to see where differences exist.
4. Provide a probable passage to the students. Students should use the words from their charts to complete a probable passage, as shown in #3 of the blackline master
5. Finally, have the students read chapter 27 of *Wish You Well* and compare it to the probable passage. Discuss the differences between the prediction and the actual text.

Blackline Master

Probable Passage 2 — *Wish You Well*, Chapter 27

1. Read and discuss the following list of key words and phrases:

be a boy	refuses	in the barn
Billy Davis	warm, summer night	pregnant mare
Louisa's farm	apologizes	angered threats
take a rifle	Lou	no midwife
hot water and clean sheets	most miserable soul	greedy actions

2. Categorize each of these words in one of the columns in the chart below:

Setting	Characters	Problem	Resolution

3. Probable Passage: Place the key words from your chart in the probable passage below. Change word categories at this point if you wish.

The chapter begins on a _____. _____ is one of the characters who arrives at _____ stating that his mother is about to give birth, but there is _____. Louisa agrees to go and Eugene encourages her to _____. When Louisa insists on going alone, Lou refuses to stay. Upon arrival, George Davis is _____, tending to the _____. Louisa instructs Lou and the Davis children to gather _____. While Louisa is with Sally Davis, the climax of the chapter occurs — Lou _____ to Billy Davis. Yet, just when they begin to resolve their conflict, George Davis offers _____, telling Louisa he wants her off his land. When Louisa _____, he demands that the baby _____. When the baby is born, Sally names him after _____. The chapter ends with Louisa and Lou's discussing George Davis' _____. They describe him as a _____.

4. After reading chapter 27 of *Wish You Well,* discuss below the differences between your predictions in the probable passage and what actually happened in the chapter.

Assessment

Use the following rubric to assess the students' work:

- ACCOMPLISHED: (Score 3): Can predict exactly what will happen in the actual text.
- DEVELOPING (Score 2): Can predict some of the events that will occur in the actual text.
- BEGINNING (Score 1): Cannot predict, based on the context clues, what will happen in the actual text.

Answer Key for the Preceding Probable Passage

This chapter begins on a warm, summer night. Billy Davis is one of the characters who arrives at Louisa's farm, stating that his mother is about to give birth, but there is no midwife. Louisa agrees to go and Eugene encourages her to take a rifle. When Louisa insists on going alone, Lou refuses to stay. Upon arrival, George Davis is in the barn, tending to the pregnant mare. Louisa instructs Lou and the Davis children to gather hot water and sheets. While Louisa is with Sally Davis, the climax of the chapter occurs — Lou apologizes to Billy Davis. Yet, just when they begin to resolve their conflict, George Davis offers angry threats, telling Louisa he wants her off his land. When Louisa refuses, he demands that the baby be a boy. When the baby is born, Sally names him after Lou. The chapter ends with Louisa and Lou's discussing George Davis' greedy actions. They describe him as a most miserable soul.

Story Impressions

Reading Skills

- Establishing a purpose for reading
- Forming an overall impression of the text through predictions

Correlation to the Virginia English Standards of Learning

7.5 • 8.3, 8.4 • 9.3 • 10.3 • 11.3 • 12.3

Overview of the "Story Impressions" Strategy

The teacher chooses key words, phrases, or concepts from several chapters and lists them in the order in which they appear in the chapters. The list will normally consist of 10 to 15 items. Students should be given enough words to form an impression of the chapters but not so many that they are able to create entire episodes that they will encounter in reading.

Activity for the "Story Impressions" Strategy

1. Make a list of words similar to the following found in chapters 1 and 2 of *Wish You Well*:
   1) Lou Cardinal
   2) notebook
   3) Oz Cardinal
   4) story-teller
   5) California
   6) choice
   7) family
   8) Virginia
   9) Grandmother
   10) mountains
   11) fatal picnic
   12) Amanda's eyes closed
2. Now present the words in a linked order by displaying the words in a vertical line with arrows connecting one word to the next. The students should see that the words must be used in a particular order. This strategy will help them when they encounter words or terms that are unfamiliar.
3. After the initial discussion, have each student write a paragraph, using all the words in the given order and summarizing what he or she thinks the chapters will be about, thus creating a Story Impression.
4. Place the students in groups of 4 to 5, and allow the group members time to share their Story Impressions so they can compare their predictions.

Important Tips to Remember

1. Students need to write down all their Story Impressions so that they will have something to reference once they read the text.

2. Have students discuss the key words so they are given the opportunity to figure out words that they do not know before they begin reading.
3. In order to prevent giving away the ending, give the students only words that suggest the main idea. Finalizing your list with an event found earlier in the selection rather than at its conclusion will solve this problem.
4. Once the students have written their Story Impressions, have them immediately begin reading the chapters. You should decide how much discussion your students need prior to reading. Some students can complete this assignment at home and return to the next class meeting prepared to read the next chapters.
5. While the "Story Impressions" strategy is similar to the "Probable Passage" strategy, it is less structured.

Assessment

Students may be assessed on the quality of their participation in their groups and receive a class-work grade according to the following rubric:

- EXCELLENT participation (Score 4)
- ABOVE AVERAGE participation (Score 3)
- ADEQUATE participation (Score 2)
- BELOW AVERAGE participation (Score 1)
- NO participation (Score 0)

Below are some specific features for evaluating the paragraph.

	Revise	Accept	Superior
1. Topic sentence is clear and correctly placed.	1 2 3 4	5 6 7	8 9 10
2. Mechanics are correct.	1 2 3 4	5 6 7	8 9 10
3. Vocabulary and word choices are interesting.	1 2 3 4	5 6 7	8 9 10
4. Sentences are clear and related to topic.	1 2 3 4	5 6 7	8 9 10
5. Sentences vary in length (8 to 15 words).	1 2 3 4	5 6 7	8 9 10
6. Agreement is correct.	1 2 3 4	5 6 7	8 9 10
7. Typing is neat with no mark-outs or white-out.	1 2 3 4	5 6 7	8 9 10
8. Paragraph focuses on a single, unified idea.	1 2 3 4	5 6 7	8 9 10
9. Paragraph achieves its intended purpose.	1 2 3 4	5 6 7	8 9 10
10. Paragraph is interesting and appealing.	1 2 3 4	5 6 7	8 9 10

During-Reading Strategies

Think-Aloud 1

Reading Skills

- Making predictions
- Comparing and contrasting
- Monitoring reading
- Visualizing the text
- Making connections

Correlation to the Virginia English Standards of Learning

7.1, 7.5, 7.6 • 8.3, 8.4 • 9.3 • 11.4

Overview of the "Think-Aloud" Strategy

Students need to think and ask questions while they read; however, struggling readers do not always know to ask the questions that good readers automatically ask. The "Think-Aloud" strategy helps students make predictions about the text; compare and contrast events, ideas, and characters; visualize the information that is described in the text; and make connections to prior knowledge.

Classroom Model/Situation

Have you ever encountered a student who was a wonderful oral reader, yet, when questioned about the content of the just-read selection, failed to give any indication that he or she had read anything at all? Consider the following scenario from a classroom teacher:

> I remember one such student in my 10th-grade English class. I'll call him Eric for this scenario. Whenever I asked for volunteers to read passages or selections from literature, all of the students would beg for Eric to read. In other words, they volunteered him. It was no wonder. Eric had a fabulous voice. The pitch was deep, and his words seemed to slide out of his mouth and float in the air, leaving us, the listeners, in an almost hypnotic state.
>
> It was a mystery to me why such a seemingly competent reader was not meeting with success in the class. Usually after a reading, I would ask questions of the class and allow anyone in the room to answer. One day, after a reading by Eric, I asked him to answer the questions. To my amazement, he did not know one answer. I said to him, "You just read the passage; you should know the answers." He replied, "I read the words and make the sounds, but I don't think about what I'm reading."
>
> His response surprised me. As a competent reader, I had never thought about the possibility of looking at words and making sounds yet not making meaning.

The "Think-Aloud" strategy is for students like Eric. It will force them to think when they read.

Activities for the "Think-Aloud" Strategy

- Model the strategy before asking the students to try it. Read a line or two from a selection, then stop to think out loud. Many students have a difficult time paying attention when reading long passages of description. The "Think-Aloud" strategy helps students focus. For example, in

chapter 18 of *Wish You Well,* Louisa has given the children a much-needed day off from the overwhelming chores of the farm. Diamond, Lou, and Oz take a long walk to town. While there, they meet Cotton and go on a tour of the courthouse and his office. Here's how the strategy goes in an excerpt from chapter 18: (Lines from the book are in regular type, while the teacher's verbal statements are in italics.)

> On the walls were portraits of white-haired men in black robes. *[Um... Judges usually wear black robes. These are probably pictures of judges.]* The children ran their hands along the carved wood and took turns sitting in the witness and jury boxes. *[That was probably exciting. Imagine being able to sit on the stand and in the jury box!]*
>
> Diamond asked to sit in the judge's chair, but Cotton didn't think that was a good idea and neither did Fred. *[Diamond probably doesn't know much about courts and judges.]* When they weren't looking, Diamond grabbed a seat anyway and came away puff-chested like a rooster, until Lou, who had seen this offense, poked him hard in the ribs. *[Diamond will try anything. At least Lou understands that some things are serious. I wonder if Diamond will get into trouble?]*

After modeling the strategy, give the students the opportunity to ask questions of the teacher. The most obvious question will probably be something like, "Do I have to stop and talk about every sentence?" Although this example models a think-aloud statement or question after every sentence, interrupting with think-aloud statements after longer passages is best. After all, it would take an extraordinary amount of time to stop and talk about every sentence in the novel! The students would never want to read again. However, in order for the students to practice, shorter passages work best in the beginning.

- Secondary reading expert, Dr. Kylene Beers offers her students a bookmark (see next page) to use during the Think-Aloud activity. It lists the following six strategies for them to remember:
  - Identify the problem.
  - Fix the problem.
  - Picture the text.
  - Predict what will happen next.
  - Make comparisons.
  - Make comments.

  In looking back at the "Think-Aloud" paragraph above, you will see the following:
  - Making comments: *Um... Judges usually wear black robes. These are probably pictures of judges.*
  - Picturing the text: *That was probably exciting. Imagine being able to sit on the stand and in the jury box!*
  - Identifying the problem: *Diamond probably doesn't know much about courts and judges.*
  - Predicting what will happen next: *Diamond will try anything. At least Lou understands that some things are serious. I wonder if Diamond will get into trouble?*

- After modeling several passages for the students, have the students work with partners to "think-aloud" several additional passages. Either give the students bookmarks as Dr. Beers did, or write the strategies on the board for easy reference. Be sure to walk around and listen to the students. Praise often! Ask questions of your own to clarify for the students.

- Provide many opportunities throughout the book for students to use the "Think-Aloud" strategy. Like anything else, this strategy takes practice. Students who are used to looking at words and making sounds but not meaning will need time to practice before reading and thinking happen all at once.

Blackline Master for copying on card stock and cutting

Bookmarks for Think-Aloud 1

1. **Identify the problem.**	**1.** **Identify the problem.**	**1.** **Identify the problem.**	**1.** **Identify the problem.**
2. **Fix the problem.**	**2.** **Fix the problem.**	**2.** **Fix the problem.**	**2.** **Fix the problem.**
3. **Picture the text.**	**3.** **Picture the text.**	**3.** **Picture the text.**	**3.** **Picture the text.**
4. **Predict what will happen next.**	**4.** **Predict what will happen next.**	**4.** **Predict what will happen next.**	**4.** **Predict what will happen next.**
5. **Make comparisons.**	**5.** **Make comparisons.**	**5.** **Make comparisons.**	**5.** **Make comparisons.**
6. **Make comments.**	**6.** **Make comments.**	**6.** **Make comments.**	**6.** **Make comments.**

Think-Aloud 2

Reading Skills

- Monitoring reading

Correlation to the Virginia English Standards of Learning

7.5 • 8.3 • 9.3 • 10.3 • 11.3 • 12.3

Overview of the "Think-Aloud" Strategy

The purpose of this strategy is to help struggling readers think about how they make meaning when they read. While one student is reading aloud selected paragraphs from *Wish You Well* and pausing to "think aloud," a partner records on a tally sheet the types of comments made by the reader. The goal is to help students learn to monitor their comprehension silently as they read. This exercise should be practiced 10 to 15 minutes once a week in order to achieve the desired results. If you feel the need to give a grade for this exercise, assess and grade the students on participation.

Activity for the "Think-Aloud" Strategy

1. Explain to the students the purpose of this exercise and that they will work in pairs to help each other. Tell the students that asking questions about a text is actually a means of identifying comprehension problems.
2. Distribute copies of the "Think-Aloud" example from the first three paragraphs of chapter 10 in *Wish You Well* and the tally sheet (see next two pages).
3. Ask the students to look at the "Think-Aloud" tally sheet as you explain the nature of the types of comments:
   - "Lou and Oz raced past the empty yard and inside the schoolhouse. Breathless, they hustled to their seats." (chapter 21, opening) *[It sounds as if they're late to school.]* — **predicting what will happen next**
   - "She had passed secret coves overhung with willow and corralled by rock. Many of the coves were graced with cups of frothing springwater. There were neglected fields of long-vanished homesteads, the broomsedge flourishing there around the rock bones of chimneys without houses." (chapter 26, section 3) *[It's easy to imagine that this was once a thriving community.]* —**picturing the text**
   - "They prepared for winter by sharpening tools with the grinder and rattail files, mucking out the stalls and spreading the manure over the plowed-under fields.…They brought the livestock in, kept them fed and watered, milked the cows, and did their chores, which now all seemed as natural as breathing." (chapter 31, section 3) *[My mother grew up on a farm and had to do the same things.]* — **making comparisons**
   - "Louisa brought over a bucket and a glass. She put the glass on the table, draped a cloth over it, and poured the milk from the bucket into it, foam bubbling up on the cloth." (chapter 12, section 2) *[I don't understand what Louisa is doing in these sentences.]* — **identifying comprehension problems**
   - "Lou looked at her glass. 'What's the cloth for?' 'Take things out the milk you don't need in you,' answered Louisa." (chapter 12, section 2) *[Oh, I now understand why the milk was poured through the cloth.]* — **fixing comprehension problems**

- "The barn smelled of stacked hay, wet earth, large animals and their warm manure. The floor was dirt covered with straw. On the walls hung bridles and harnesses, some cracked and worn out, others well oiled and supple." (chapter 12, section 2) *[I like the way these sentences paint a picture and make me almost see and smell the barn.]* — **making comments**

4. Read aloud from the model, pausing to make the bracketed "Think-Aloud" comments.
5. Have the students use the tally sheet to identify the types of comments made on the model sheet.
6. Pair up the students. Have one student in each pair read assigned paragraphs from a particular chapter in *Wish You Well* and pause to make comments. Have the listening partner identify and tally the comments made on the reading partner's tally sheet.
7. Have the pair switch roles and read the next set of consecutive paragraphs, the first reader filling out his or her partner's tally sheet.
8. When they have finished their "Think-Alouds," have the students discuss their tally sheets.

Blackline Master

Excerpt for Think-Aloud 2

From *Wish You Well*, Chapter 10, opening paragraphs

The kitchen shelves were worn, knot-holed pine, floors the same. The floorboards creaked slightly as Oz swept with a short-handled broom, while Lou loaded lengths of cut wood into the iron belly of the Sears catalogue cook stove that took up one wall of the small room. Fading sunlight came through the window and also peered through each wall crevice, and there were many. An old coal-oil lamp hung from a peg. Fat black iron kettles hung from the wall. In another corner was a food safe with hammered metal doors; a string of dried onions lay atop it and a glass jug of kerosene next to that. *[This reminds me of my great grandmother's house.]*

As Lou examined each piece of hickory or oak, it was as though she was revisiting each facet of her prior life, before throwing it in the fire, saying good-bye as the flames ate it away. The room was dark and the smells of damp and burnt wood equally pungent. *[I wonder if the house could catch on fire.]* Lou stared over at the fireplace. The opening was large, and she guessed that the cooking had been done there before the Sears cook stove had come. The brick ran to the ceiling, and iron nails were driven through the mortar all over; tools and kettles, and odd pieces of other things Lou couldn't identify but that looked well-used, hung from them. In the center of the brick wall was a long rifle resting on twin braces angled into the mortar. *[From this description, I can see how difficult cooking in the past must have been.]*

The knock on the door startled them both. Who would expect visitors so far above sea level? Lou opened the door and Diamond Skinner stared back at her with a vast smile. He held up a mess of smallmouth bass, as though he was offering her the crowns of dead kings. Loyal Jeb was beside him, his snout wrinkling as he drew in the fine fishy aroma. *[I bet that Diamond plans to have Lou cook these fish.]*

Blackline Master

Tally Sheet for Think-Aloud 2

Reader _____

Listener _____

Think-Aloud Comments	Tally
Identifying comprehension problems	
Fixing comprehension problems	
Predicting what will happen next	
Picturing the text	
Making comparisons	
Making comments	

Save the Last Word for Me

Reading Skills

- Rereading
- Comparing and contrasting
- Articulating meaning
- Identifying literary elements
- Analyzing descriptive writing
- Identifying theme
- Identifying conflict
- Analyzing persuasive technique
- Drawing conclusions

Correlation to the Virginia English Standards of Learning

7.1, 7.5, 7.6, 7.8 • 8.3, 8.4, 8.5 • 9.2, 9.3 • 10.1, 10.3, 10.9 • 11.1, 11.2, 11.3

Overview of the "Save the Last Word for Me" Strategy

The "Save the Last Word for Me" strategy requires the students to find a passage in the text that illustrates an example of a concept, such as a literary element or a technique, specified by the teacher. It also requires the students to discuss their choices and defend them.

Activity for the "Save the Last Word for Me" Strategy

1. Have the students choose a passage from *Wish You Well*
   - that is humorous (More advanced students should also be able to explain a method used by the author to make the passage funny.)
   - that uses figurative language, explaining what is literally meant by the author
   - that clearly defines George Davis as the antagonist of the novel
   - that supports the conflict of the novel
   - in which the author uses imagery
   - that defines irony of situation in the novel
   - that presents a persuasive technique used by Southern Valley Coal and Gas to get Louisa's land.
2. Have the students copy their selected passage onto a note card.
3. Then have the students write a paragraph on the back of the card that gives multiple reasons for their selecting this passage.
4. Group the students into small groups, and have each student read his or her selected passage to the group and get feedback about what the others in the group think the passage means, listening for comments related to the given assignment.
5. Then have each student turn his or her card over and read what he or she has written about why this particular selection was made — why this passage illustrates the given concept/idea.
6. Tell the other students that if they disagree with the choice, they must express their reasons for disagreeing.
7. Tell the class that the "last word" is "saved" for the student who made the selection, and he or she may choose either to alter or stand by the choice.

Blackline Master

Assessment — Save the Last Word for Me (SLWM)

Name_____ Date_____

Category	Consistent	Inconsistent	Comments
1. Reads and understands the book			
2. Completes assigned reading on time			
3. Participates in SLWM discussion			
4. Provides at least two reasons for choosing his or her passage			
5. Contributes thoughtful comments to SLWM group discussion			
6. Listens attentively and responds appropriately to peer comments in discussion			
7. Completes assigned SLWM activity on time			
8. Completes SLWM to the best of his or her ability			

Final SLWM Grade _____

Grading system:

- Consistent for all areas (7 out of 8): A
- Consistent for most areas (6 out of 8): B
- Consistent for many areas (5 out of 8): C
- Consistent for some areas (4 out of 8): D
- Inconsistent for many areas (3 out of 8): F

*Scoring criteria for assessment of SLWM should be provided to students at the beginning of the activity.

Retellings

Reading Skills

- Summarizing
- Identifying literature elements
- Analyzing chronological order
- Identifying the main idea
- Recalling facts

Correlation to the Virginia English Standards of Learning

7.1, 7.5, 7.6, 7.8 • 8.3, 8.4, 8.5 • 9.2, 9.3, 9.6 • 10.3,10.9 • 11.3 • 12.1

Overview of the "Retellings" Strategy

This strategy should be modeled for students before they are asked to try it. Once they understand the process, ask students to retell specific events from the novel or retell the plot in its entirety. The teacher should decide if this assignment should be written or presented orally. Students should be given a copy of the rubric that will be used for evaluation (see next page). To incorporate retellings in the classroom effectively, the teacher should model this strategy often. Remember that students need to be provided with a rubric that can be used to plan and assess retellings.

Activity for the "Retellings" Strategy

1. Have each student retell one of the following:
   - the entire plot of the novel *Wish You Well*
   - Lou and Oz's journey from New York City to the mountains in Virginia
   - events of the story that they consider to be humorous, including some exact quotes and explaining their meaning
   - Lou, Oz, and Diamond's trip into the town of Dickens
   - what happened at the mines when Eugene went to get a bucket of coal
   - the resolution of the conflict in the novel
   - an event from the novel that they consider relevant to society today
   - events that support George Davis as the antagonist of the novel
   - events that portray Diamond Skinner as a smart boy without book learning
   - events in the novel that brought tears to their eyes, including specific quotes and diction (word choice) that prompted this emotion
   - settings in the novel that the author describes by using sensory language.
2. Evaluate the students according to the rubric shown on the next page.

Blackline Master

Retellings

Retellings Rubric

Name _____ Date _____

Text _____ Selected by _____

Directions: Use the following checklist to rate the retelling. For each item below, circle a number from 0 to 3. (On this scale, 0 means the retelling did not include the item at all, and 3 means the retelling completely and successfully included the item.)

Does the retelling...	Rating			
1. have an introduction that includes the novel's title and setting of Dickens, Virginia?	0	1	2	3
2. list the main characters and explain their relationship to one another?	0	1	2	3
3. explain the roles of Louisa Mae Cardinal and the Southern Valley Coal and Gas Company as well as of the other antagonists and protagonists?	0	1	2	3
4. list the main events as they occur from New York City to Dickens, Virginia?	0	1	2	3
5. discuss the internal and external conflicts faced by Lou Cardinal?	0	1	2	3
6. explain how Lou's conflicts were resolved?	0	1	2	3
7. mention the reader's personal response to the novel?	0	1	2	3

Total Score _____

Comments from listener about the retelling:

_____

_____

Suggestions for the next retelling:

_____

_____

Literature Circles

Reading Skills

- Reading and discussing books
- Connecting with books
- Taking responsibility as readers and constructing meaning together
- Debating and challenging one another
- Making drawings and notes that reflect readers' ideas
- Asking open-ended questions
- Reading aloud of favorite passages
- Revisiting the text constantly
- Proving points and settling differences by using specific passages
- Thinking critically

Correlation to the Virginia English Standards of Learning

7.1, 7.2, 7.5,7.6 • 8.3, 8.4 • 9.2, 9.3 • 10.1, 10.3 • 11.1

Overview of the "Literature Circle" Strategy

"Literature Circles" — small groups of students gathered together to discuss a piece of literature in depth — is a teaching method that allows students to become critical thinkers as they engage in ongoing dialogue with a book, in this case *Wish You Well.* Literature circles provide a way for students to engage in critical thinking and reflection as they read, discuss, and respond to the book. Collaboration is at the heart of this approach. In classrooms all across the country, literature circles are helping to create a student-centered learning environment. Through structured discussion and extended written and artistic response, this strategy guides the students to a deeper understanding of what they read. The key aspect of this strategy is the structured use of role sheets (provided on the following pages) as the students learn to discuss and contribute to the group. These sheets can also be used as evaluation tools.

Activity for the "Literature Circle" Strategy

1. Select members for the Literature Circles (discussion groups).
2. Assign roles for the members of each circle.
3. Assign reading to be completed by the circles inside or outside of class.
4. Select circle meeting dates.
5. Help students prepare for their roles in their circles.
6. Act as a facilitator for the circles.

Blackline Master

Discussion Sheet for Literature Circles

Name: _____

Group: _____

Book: *Wish You Well* by David Baldacci

Role: _____ Pages: _____

- While you are reading or after you have finished reading, prepare for the circle meeting by assuming the identity of one of the strategists below and completing and then presenting your strategy:
  1. **Clarifier:** Your job is to find 5 words or concepts that are important to the story, list and explain each word/concept, and write down its page number.
     1.

     2.

     3.

     4.

     5.

  2. **Summarizer:** Your job is to prepare a brief summary of the book. You want to convey how the characters are influenced by the various events and how the main conflict contributes to the resolution.
     Key Events:

     Summary:

  3. **Questioner:** Your job is to develop a list of four questions about this book that your circle might discuss. Your task is to help circle members discuss the big ideas in the book and share their reactions. Center your questions on who, what, when, where, and how. Be prepared to read aloud key passages that present the answers. List page numbers.
     Question 1:

     Answer

     Question 2:

     Answer

Discussion Sheet for Literature Circles, page 2

Question 3:

Answer

Question 4:

Answer

4. **Predictor:** Your job is to predict what you think will happen next in this story. After each prediction defend your reasoning.
   Based on what I have read, I predict that the following events will happen:

   1.

   Why:

   2.

   Why:

   3.

   Why:

Blackline Master

Literature Circles Role Sheet

Summarizer

Name _____ Circle _____

Book _____

Meeting Date _____ Assignment: Pages _____ to _____

Summarizer: Your job is to prepare a brief summary of today's reading. Your group discussion will start with your 1–2 minute statement that covers the key points, main highlights, and general idea of today's reading assignment.

Summary:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Key Points:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Connections: What did today's reading remind you of?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Blackline Master

Literature Circles Role Sheet

Discussion Director

Name _____ Circle _____

Book _____

Meeting Date _____ Assignment: Pages _____ to _____

Discussion Director: Your job is to develop a list of questions that your group might want to discuss about this part of the book. Don't worry about the small details; your task is to help people talk over the big ideas in the reading and share their reactions. Usually the best discussion questions come from your own thoughts, feelings, and concerns as you read. You can list them below during or after your reading. You may also use some of the general questions below to develop topics for your group.

Possible discussion questions or topics for today

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Sample questions

- What was going through your mind while you read this?
- How did you feel while reading this part of the book?
- What was discussed in this section of the book?
- Can someone summarize this part of the book briefly?
- Did today's reading remind you of any real-life experiences?
- What questions did you have when you finished this section?
- Did anything in this section of the book surprise you?
- What are the one or two most important ideas?
- What are some things you think will be discussed next?

Topic to be carried over to tomorrow: _____

Assignment for tomorrow: Pages _____ to _____

Blackline Master

Literature Circles Role Sheet

Investigator*

Name _____ Circle _____

Book _____

Meeting Date _____ Assignment: Pages _____ to _____

Investigator: Your job is to dig up some background information on any topic related to your book. This might include

- the geography, weather, culture, or history of the book's setting
- information about the author — his or her life and other works
- information about the time period portrayed in the book
- pictures, objects, or materials that illustrate elements of the book
- the history and derivation of words or names used in the book
- music that reflects the book or its time.

This is *not* a formal research report. The idea is to find bits of information or material that helps your group better understand the book. Investigate something that really interests you — something that struck you as puzzling or curious while you were reading.

Sources for information

- the introduction, preface, or "about the author" section of the book
- library books and magazines
- on-line computer search or encyclopedia
- interviews with people who know the topic
- other novels, nonfiction, or textbooks you've read

Topic to be carried over to tomorrow: _____

Assignment for tomorrow: Pages _____ to _____

* Adapted from *Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in the Student-Centered Classroom* by Harvey Daniels (Stenhouse Publishers: York, Maine, 1994. Published in Canada by Pembroke Publishers, Markham, Ontario, 1994).

Blackline Master

Literature Circles Role Sheet

Illustrator*

Name _____ Circle _____

Book _____

Meeting Date _____ Assignment: Pages _____ to _____

Illustrator: Your job is to draw some kind of picture related to the reading. It can be a sketch, cartoon, diagram, flow chart, or stick figure scene. You can draw a picture of something that is discussed specifically in your book, something that the reading brought to mind, or a picture that conveys any idea or feeling you got from the reading. Any kind of drawing or graphic is okay. You can even label things with words if that helps. Make your drawing on this paper. If you need more room, use the back.

Connections: What did today's reading bring to mind?

_____

_____

* Adapted from *Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in the Student-Centered Classroom* by Harvey Daniels (Stenhouse Publishers: York, Maine, 1994. Published in Canada by Pembroke Publishers, Markham, Ontario, 1994).

Blackline Master

Literature Circles Role Sheet

Connector*

Name _____ Circle _____

Book _____

Meeting Date _____ Assignment: Pages _____ to _____

Connector: Your job is to find connections between the book your group is reading and the world outside. This means connecting the reading to your own life, happenings at school or in the community, similar events at other times and places, or other people or problems that this book brings to mind. You might also see connections between this book and other writings on the same topic or other writings by the same author. There are no right answers here. Whatever the reading connects *you* with is worth sharing!

Some connections I found between this reading and other people, places, events, authors:

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

4. _____

Topic to be carried over to tomorrow: _____

Assignment for tomorrow: Pages _____ to _____

* Adapted from *Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in the Student-Centered Classroom* by Harvey Daniels (Stenhouse Publishers: York, Maine, 1994. Published in Canada by Pembroke Publishers, Markham, Ontario, 1994).

Blackline Master

Literature Circles Role Sheet

Travel Tracer*

Name _____ Circle _____

Book _____

Meeting Date _____ Assignment: Pages _____ to _____

Travel Tracer: When you are reading a book in which characters move around often and the scene changes frequently, it is important for everyone in your group to know *where* things are happening and how the setting may have changed. So that's your job: to track carefully where the action takes place during today's reading. Describe each setting in detail, either in words or with an action map or diagram you can show to your group. You may use the back of this sheet or another sheet. Be sure to give the page locations where the scene is described.

Describe or sketch the setting

- **where today's action begins**
  Page where it is described _____

  _____

  _____

- **where today's key events happen**
  Page where it is described _____

  _____

  _____

- **where today's events end**
  Page where it is described _____

  _____

  _____

Topic to be carried over to tomorrow: _____

Assignment for tomorrow: Pages _____ to _____

* Adapted from *Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in the Student-Centered Classroom* by Harvey Daniels (Stenhouse Publishers: York, Maine, 1994. Published in Canada by Pembroke Publishers, Markham, Ontario, 1994).

Blackline Master

Literature Circles Role Sheet

Vocabulary Enricher*

Name _____ Circle _____

Book _____

Meeting Date _____ Assignment: Pages _____ to _____

Vocabulary Enricher: Your job is to be on the lookout for a few especially important words in today's reading. If you find words that are puzzling or unfamiliar, mark them while you are reading and then later jot down their definition, either from a dictionary or from some other source. You may also run across familiar words that stand out somehow in the reading — words that are repeated a lot, are used in an unusual way, or provide a key to the meaning of the text. Mark these special words, and be ready to point them out to the group. When your circle meets, help members find and discuss these words.

Page No. & Paragraph	Word	Definition

Topic to be carried over to tomorrow: _____

Assignment for tomorrow: Pages _____ to _____

* Adapted from *Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in the Student-Centered Classroom* by Harvey Daniels (Stenhouse Publishers: York, Maine, 1994. Published in Canada by Pembroke Publishers, Markham, Ontario, 1994).

Blackline Master

Literature Circles

Daily Literature Study Record

Circle _____

Book _____

Date started _____

Name	Date	Book Brought	Prepared for Discussion	Participated in Discussion	Comments

Blackline Master

Literature Circles

Novel Study Self-Evaluation Guide

Name _____ Circle _____

Book _____

Date started _____

_____ I brought my book to class.

_____ I read the required chapters each time.

_____ I talked about the book in the discussion group.

_____ I listened to what other people had to say about the book.

_____ I stayed on task in my group.

_____ I used sticky notes to mark places I didn't understand or places I wanted to discuss with my group.

_____ I wrote in my reading log and finished my assignments on time.

My overall rating of myself is as follows:

_____

_____

_____

I think the person who should get the best grade in my group is _____ because

_____

_____

_____

_____

Blackline Master

Literature Circles

Self-Assessment Form

Name _____ Circle _____

Book _____

Date started _____

My Contribution to Group Discussion

Rate each entry as: 1 – Needs Improving, 2 – Satisfactory, or 3 – Very Good

Type of Contribution	Rating	Example
I shared my ideas and offered my suggestions.	1 2 3	
I spoke clearly and slowly enough to be understood.	1 2 3	
I answered others' questions.	1 2 3	
I remained on topic and helped the group stay focused.	1 2 3	
I encouraged others to participate.	1 2 3	
I disagreed without hurting others' feelings.	1 2 3	
I summarized or repeated my ideas when necessary.	1 2 3	
I gave reasons for opinions.	1 2 3	
I listened courteously and effectively.	1 2 3	
I tried to understand and extend the suggestions of others.	1 2 3	

My most important contribution to the discussion was _____

_____

My plan for improvement is _____

_____

Blackline Master

Literature Circles

Literature Circle Evaluation

Name _____ Circle _____

Book _____

Date started _____

Preparation	Student	Teacher
I am prepared for our meetings by consistently doing my preparation work in my notebook.	1 2 3	1 2 3
I am prepared for our meetings by reliably bringing my literature book to class.	1 2 3	1 2 3
I am prepared for our meetings by completing my reading assignments on time.	1 2 3	1 2 3
Participation	**Student**	**Teacher**
I participate well in discussions by asking questions of others.	1 2 3	1 2 3
I participate well in discussions by offering my own ideas.	1 2 3	1 2 3
I participate well in discussions by encouraging and respecting others' opinions.	1 2 3	1 2 3
I participate well in discussions by making eye contact with others.	1 2 3	1 2 3
I participate well in discussions by keeping my voice at arm's length (cool, objective).	1 2 3	1 2 3
Comments	**Student**	**Teacher**
I am doing my job well.		
Yes, I do _____. (Select item(s) from the list above.)		
I don't always do _____, and I need to improve. (Select item(s) from the list above.)		

Literature Circles

Assessment Form for Discussion Groups*

Names _____ Circle _____

Book _____

Date started _____

Groups Discussion Topic or Focus _____

_____

Check the appropriate box. Provide evidence where possible.

	Yes	No	Sometimes	Evidence
Everyone participates and shares in the discussion process. Communication is interactive.				
The group is supportive of its individual members. Group climate promotes friendliness.				
Group members often ask questions for clarification or elaboration.				
The group discussion stays on topic or on directly related issues.				
The group is energetic and enthusiastic.				

What was the best thing about the way this group worked together?

_____

* Saskatchewan Education, *English Language Arts: A Curriculum Guide for the Middle Level* (draft) (Regina: Saskatchewan Education, 1996).

What was one problem the group had?

How did you solve it?

What else might you have done?

What specific plans do you have for improvement?

Read, Rate, and Reread 1

Reading Skills

- Determining writer's purpose
- Identifying the main idea
- Monitoring reading
- Establishing a purpose for reading

Correlation to the Virginia English Standards of Learning

7.5, 7.6 • 8.4 • 9.3, 9.4 • 10.1, 10.3 • 11.3

Overview of "Read, Rate, and Reread" Strategy

This lesson will help students improve their reading comprehension by emphasizing the importance of careful, repeated readings of material. This strategy can be adapted for use during students' reading of any section of the novel. In this lesson, chapter 5 of *Wish You Well* will be used because it is short enough to be read two or three times by all students during a class period. It is also far enough into the novel for the students to have some prior knowledge to help with understanding.

The students will read a short selection three times and evaluate their understanding of the passage on each successive reading. They will further develop their skill at monitoring their own reading comprehension.

Activity for "Read, Rate, and Reread" Strategy

1. Assign chapter 5 to be read in class. Ask students to rate their understanding of their reading on a scale of 1 to 10. Also, ask them to list any questions they have about their reading. Explain that questions may be about what happened, vocabulary, motivation, or anything else that seems unclear. Although students could do this activity without a chart, one that may prove helpful has been provided on the next page.
2. Direct students to read the chapter and rate their understanding again. Have them indicate which earlier questions they can now answer.
3. Ask students to work in groups of two or three to discuss any unanswered questions they have. Students who answer the questions should indicate the portion of the text that led them to their answer. The groups should list any questions they are still unable to answer. At this point, the questions should include some discussion/opinion questions that might be discussed by the entire class.
4. Ask students to read the chapter for a third time and rate their understanding of the passage one last time.
5. Discuss any remaining questions with the entire class.

Assessment

Ask students to write a sentence or two about what they learned from this reading strategy. Then assess the exercise through discussion with the entire class. Include such questions as the following:

- What did you learn from this activity?
- What was most useful about the activity?
- How will this experience affect the way you approach reading material in the future?
- Did your understanding ratings change? If so, how?
- How do you think your reading of the four previous chapters affected your understanding of this chapter of the novel?

Blackline Master

Read, Rate, Reread 1

1. Read the assigned selection, and in the second column, rate your understanding, using a scale of from 1 to 10, with 10 as the highest rating. In the third column, list any questions you have about the selection.
2. Read the selection a second time, and again rate your understanding. In the third column, list any additional questions you have. In the fourth column, note those questions that were answered by the second reading.
3. Work in a group to answer any of your remaining questions. Note those questions that are now answered.
4. As a group, list any questions that remain unanswered.
5. Read the selection for a third time, and again rate your understanding.

	Understanding Rating (Scale 1–10)	**Questions**	**Answers**
1st Reading			
2nd Reading			
3rd Reading			

Read, Rate, Reread 2

Reading Skills

- Identifying main idea
- Determining writer's purpose

Correlation to the Virginia English Standards of Learning

7.5 • 8.3 • 9.3 • 10.3 • 11.3 • 12.3

Overview of the "Read, Rate, Reread" Strategy

Motivating struggling readers to read a passage once is difficult. To have them reread the passage may be even more difficult. Many inexperienced readers do not realize the importance of a skill like rereading. The strategy entitled "Read, Rate, Reread" can help improve a student's comprehension of a text.

The students will read a text once, rate their understanding of that text on a scale of 1 to 10, and write questions about what they did not understand. They will repeat this process two more times. Then, they will discuss unanswered questions in groups of two. Finally, they will bring their remaining questions to the whole class.

Activity for the "Read, Rate, and Reread" Strategy

1. Outline for students the process of this strategy. Tell them they will read a portion of *Wish You Well* three times. After each reading, they will rate themselves on how well they comprehend what they just read and will write down questions they have about the text.
2. Distribute copies of the blackline master "Read, Rate, Reread 2," found on the next page.
3. Have the students read chapter 7 of *Wish You Well*, rate their comprehension of the reading, and write any questions they have about the selection.
4. Have the students repeat this process twice.
5. After the third reading, place students in pairs to discuss remaining questions.
6. Tell students to cross out any of the questions they answer.
7. Have the class discuss the unanswered questions and the change of ratings from reading to reading.
8. Discuss Baldacci's description of the setting. Ask, "What do you experience as a reader upon Lou and Oz's arrival to the mountains?" Have students complete Part 2 of the blackline master and share their responses with the class.

Assessment

Assess the students' understanding by having them respond to the following questions:

- After the first reading of chapter 7, how well did you understand what you read?
- After discussing your questions with a partner, how well did you understand your reading?
- How did your ratings change each time you read?
- How do you think this strategy will help you change your reading and understanding of chapter 7?

Blackline Master

Read, Rate, Reread 2 — *Wish You Well*, Chapter 7

Part 1: Directions

Read chapter 7 of *Wish You Well* and rate your understanding on a scale of 1 to 10, 10 meaning you completely understood the text. Record your rating in the box labeled “First Rating.” Then, on the line provided for item one, write any questions you have. Repeat this process two more times, filling in the lines for items 2 and 3. Then, follow the instructions for items 4 and 5.

First Rating	Second Rating	Third Rating

1. Write down any questions you have after the first reading of chapter 7.

2. Read the selection a second time. This time, slow down any part of the reading that was difficult the first time. Record your rating in the “Second Rating” box. Cross out any questions you can now answer. Write down any new questions you have after the second reading.

3. Read the selection a final time, and discuss with a partner any unanswered questions. Cross out any questions you can now answer. Record your rating in the “Third Rating” box.

Part 2: Discussion

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce to you the main setting of the story. Think about Baldacci’s description of the setting. Then, use the back of this sheet to answer the questions below.

4. How does he describe the mountains? Write down sentences from the selection that describe this new world that Lou and Oz enter.

5. Look at the sentences you wrote for item 4. What do you experience as a reader after reading Baldacci’s description of Lou and Oz’s new “home”?

Most Important Word

Reading Skills

- Identifying the main idea
- Making generalizations
- Summarizing

Correlation to the Virginia English Standards of Learning

7.1, 7.5 • 8.3 • 9.3 • 10.1, 10.3 • 11.3

Overview of the "Most Important Word " Strategy

The craft of writing is primarily a process of choosing individual words to comprise precise phrases and choosing ways to place those phrases in an order that will yield well-crafted, meaningful sentences. Throughout *Wish You Well*, Baldacci uses a number of words consistently to draw the reader into the body of the text, making unfamiliar characters become familiar in the readers' minds. Baldacci's use of important words assists the reader in maneuvering through the text while maintaining a focus on overall meaning.

The "Most Important Word" strategy may be used at any point in the reading of *Wish You Well*, but teachers and students may find the strategy most useful if it is used from the beginning to the end of the text.

Activity for the "Most Important Word " Strategy

1. Invite the students into a discussion of the words *wish* and *well*, as found in the title of the novel.
2. Begin the discussion by brainstorming definitions of the two words. These definitions may be from the dictionary or may be student-generated. Record these definitions on an overhead transparency.
3. Ask students to identify various passages in which these two words are used as part of a phrase or alone, and ask them to explain the significance of these instances. (Note: The wishing well is first introduced and identified as such toward the end of chapter 11.)
4. With a number of examples listed and explained, have the students discuss in small groups or write about the significance of the words *wish* and *well* in the title of Baldacci's novel.
5. Divide students into small groups, and assign each group a certain number of chapters of the novel to examine.
6. Have the students scour their assigned chapters for important words used by Baldacci to support the theme of the novel.
7. Have each group report to the class the words they found most important in their second reading.
8. Keep a tally of the "Most Important Words" each group identifies.
9. Use this list as the basis for a whole-class discussion, noting any common words / phrases identified. The ensuing discussion will help solidify for students an author's intent in choosing words carefully to craft a message.

Assessment

As a concluding activity, ask students to write an essay in which they show how important words affect their understanding of one of the elements of fiction in this novel. Use the following rubric to assess the writing:

Argumentative Writing: Primary Trait Rubric

Criteria

- statement of opinion
- language control
- treatment of opposing point of view
- supporting reasons
- appropriate voice / tone
- developed arguments
- mechanical correctness

Presenting an Argument

Elaborated Argument (6): The paper states an opinion and gives compelling reasons to support the opinion. It also presents clear, detailed, and specific explanations in support of the argument. It demonstrates strong language control (word choice, sentence variety). Voice and tone are appropriate for audience and topic. It acknowledges and refutes opposing points of view. It contains almost no mechanical and usage errors.

Developed Argument (5): The paper states an opinion and provides legitimate reasons to support the opinion. It also presents several clearly developed explanations in support of the argument. It demonstrates an awareness of audience through the use of voice and / or selection of supporting details. It demonstrates good language control and addresses the opposite point of view. There may be a few errors in mechanics, usage, or sentence structure, but they do not interfere with communication.

Attempting to Present an Argument

Argument (4): The paper states an opinion and gives reasons to support the opinion. Although logical, the explanations are not well developed or detailed. It contains a brief summary of the opposite point of view but does not discuss or refute it. There may be consistent errors in mechanics, usage, or sentence structure, but these errors do not interfere with communication.

Elaborated Opinion (3): The paper states an opinion, gives reasons to support the opinion, and attempts to develop the opinion with further explanation. However, the explanations given are vague, inconsistent, incomplete, or disjointed. The paper may or may not contain a brief reference to the opposite point of view. Generally, the writing demonstrates weak control of such elements as word choice and organization. Errors in mechanics, usage, or sentence structure occasionally interfere with communication.

Writing about an Opinion

Extended Opinion (2): The paper states an opinion and gives reasons to support the opinion, but the reasons are not explained or the explanations are confusing. There is no reference to another point of view. There are frequent problems with sentence structure and word choice. The paper may evidence a consistent pattern of errors in mechanics, usage, and sentence structure that interferes with communication.

Opinion (1): The paper is a statement of opinion, but no reasons are given to support the opinion, or the reasons given are inconsistent or unrelated to the opinion. Although an attempt may have been made to support an opinion, the writer's views typically are presented with little clarity, organization, coherence, or supporting evidence. The writing reflects little or no writer's voice or audience awareness. It may contain many distracting errors in mechanics, usage, and sentence structure.

Elements of Fiction Chart

Reading Skills

- Making generalizations
- Determining cause and effects
- Using chronology
- Making connections

Correlation to the Virginia English Standards of Learning

7.5 • 8.2 • 9.3 • 11.3 • 12.6

Overview of the "Elements of Fiction Chart" Strategy

Throughout a novel, the author provides pertinent information to assist the reader in comprehending the action of the story. Each element of an Elements of Fiction Chart is separately helpful to the reader in creating a mental picture. The reader is afforded an opportunity to identify the action's setting, given a description of each of the major characters, presented with the goals the characters are trying to accomplish and the relationship of these goals to the novel, and shown the message that is conveyed by the author. Attending to these elements is an on-going process that should be revisited frequently to update information as needed. This is a good culminating activity to use after reading a series of chapters.

Activity for the "Elements of Fiction Chart" Strategy

Have the students complete an Elements of Fiction Chart (see next page) for *Wish You Well*. Clues have been provided to refresh the memory of students as to where information from the novel should be placed. The first two elements, Setting and Character Traits, can be completed more readily than some of the others. As the reading of the novel progresses, students will be able to complete more of the chart.

Assessment

The easiest way to grade this activity is to award 20 points for each element, for a total of 100 points.

Blackline Master

The Elements of Fiction Chart

Name _____

Book _____

SETTING	CHARACTER TRAITS	CHARACTER GOALS	PLOT	THEME
Where does the story take place?	What are the names and descriptions of the major characters in the novel?	What is the character trying to accomplish?	Rising Action: What information leads to the problem or conflict? Climax: What is the unfolding of the conflict and how are the major characters affected? Falling Action: How is the conflict resolved?	What is the message the author is trying to convey by writing the work?

Positive Profile

Reading Skills

- Analyzing cause and effect
- Summarizing
- Making generalizations
- Making inferences
- Making connections

Correlation to the Virginia English Standards of Learning

7.5, 7.6 • 8.3 • 9.3 • 10.3

Overview of the "Positive Profile" Strategy

Throughout a novel, a character's personality evolves. The purpose of this exercise is to create a positive profile of a particular character by gathering information about the character, evaluating and synthesizing the information, and creating a positive written impression of him or her.

Activity for the "Positive Profile" Strategy

1. Have students choose from the novel one character whose attributes can be highlighted in a positive manner.
2. Ask the students to create a diary of information about their character, including information about the character's nickname(s), strengths, hobbies, and actions.
3. Have the students use the information from the diary to create a positive profile of the character, ending with a positive statement about him or her.

Assessment

The students should be assessed on how well they have profiled their character — how complete their gathered information is and how well they have assessed this information to create a complete and accurate profile.

Blackline Master

Positive Profile

Directions

Create a positive profile for a character in the novel. Choose either Eugene, Lou, Louisa, Jack, Amanda, Diamond, Cotton, Oz, or Billy.

Complete name: _____

Nickname: _____

Strengths: _____

_____

_____

Hobbies: _____

_____

Smartest action performed: _____

_____

_____

Questionable actions: _____

_____

_____

Positive statement about the character: _____

_____

_____

_____

Predicting the Outcomes

Reading Skills

- Making predictions
- Making connections
- Making inferences
- Determining cause and effect

Correlation to the Virginia English Standards of Learning

7.6 • 8.3 • 9.4 • 11.4

Overview of the "Predicting the Outcomes" Strategy

"Predicting the Outcomes" is a strategy that allows students to "stop," "drop," and "roll." Students are encouraged to stop where they are, drop the novel (close the book momentarily), and roll all of the information they have into a prediction of what will happen in the coming chapters. This activity should reoccur during the reading of the novel and is effective throughout to determine the comprehension of the students.

Activity for the "Predicting the Outcomes" Strategy

Several questions have been provided to guide students in predicting what may happen next in the novel. The strategy can be applied to any character at any point in the reading of the book.

1. Have the students read up to chapter 20 and answer the following questions about Diamond:
   - Is Diamond always very vague about his personal life?
   - What do you believe has happened to his family?
   - Who is responsible for his care?
   - Is Diamond responsible for the mishaps that have been occurring in the next town?
   - What will happen to Diamond?
2. Have each student use information from chapters 6 through 20 to predict the life and fate of Diamond and write down his or her predictions.
3. In a class discussion, have the students tell what they know about Diamond.
4. Ask the students as a class to predict the future of Diamond, using the information discussed in class. Write this class prediction on the board.

Assessment

Have the students compare their individual written predictions with those of the class and rate their prediction as same, similar, or different. After the students have completed their reading of the novel, revisit this activity, and have them compare and rate their individual and class predictions with what actually happens to Diamond.

Logographic Cues

Reading Skills

- Understanding text structure
- Identifying the main idea

Correlation to the Virginia English Standards of Learning

7.1, 7.5 • 8.3 • 9.3 • 10.1, 10.3 • 11.3

Overview of the "Logographic Cues" Strategy

A logographic cue is a simple symbol or picture that acts as a visual reminder of an important literary element in a text, thereby providing a support for students as they read. While this strategy may be used before, during, or after reading, the activity below employs the strategy during the reading of *Wish You Well.* Baldacci's use of description assists the reader in visualizing characters, setting, and motifs throughout the novel. However, a student reader might find it helpful to mark the text with symbols to remind himself or herself of the location of these elements.

Activity for the "Logographic Cues" Strategy

1. As a means of modeling the strategy, tell the students that one of the major motifs used by Baldacci is that of the railroad. In the text, the railroad serves as a division as well as a connection between places and people.
2. Ask the students to design a cue for references to the railroad and to mark the text with this cue. (The railroad is first introduced at the beginning of chapter 4.)
3. Read aloud passages referring to the railroad, and point out the importance of this motif in determining one of Baldacci's intentions in this novel.
4. For individual practice, ask the students to design their own logographic cue for Baldacci's descriptions of Virginia.
5. Invite the students to mark the text with this cue each time they read a passage that describes some aspect of the Virginia setting of the novel.
6. Divide students into small groups, and have the groups discuss the passages they have marked with logographic cues for the Virginia setting. Be sure that the students discuss the importance of setting in each passage.
7. In a whole-class discussion, ask the groups to share their determinations of the importance of setting, and determine if similarities of importance of setting exist among the student groups.

Assessment

As a concluding activity, ask the students to write an essay in which they discuss the importance of the railroad in the conflict of the novel or the importance of setting in determining theme. Use the following rubric to assess the essays.

Argumentative Writing: Analytic Rubric

Standard: To convince a reader to consider an opinion.

Scoring Guide: Each category is rated 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest)

Statement of Opinion **_____ of 5**

- States opinion in the first paragraph
- Asserts an arguable position
- Provides a clear, specific, and elaborated focus for the essay

Arguments and Explanations **_____ of 5**

- Supports opinion with clear and compelling reasons
- Provides detailed, specific explanations of reasons

Opposing Point of View **_____ of 5**

- Acknowledges other point(s) of view
- Addresses and refutes arguments in other point(s) of view

Tone **_____ of 5**

- Chooses precise and appropriate words
- Reflects awareness of audience through use of appropriate voice

Language Control **_____ of 5**

- Makes few or no errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics

Total: _____ of 25

After-Reading Strategies

Sketch To Stretch

Reading Skills

- Identifying main ideas / themes and visually expressing themes
- Recognizing / analyzing cause-and-effect relationships
- Making inferences
- Drawing conclusions
- Forming generalizations
- Creating summaries

Correlation to the Virginia English Standards Of Learning

7.5, 7.8 • 8.3, 8.5 • 9.3, 9.6 • 10.3, 10.7 • 11.3, 11.7 • 12.3, 12.7

Overview of the "Sketch To Stretch" Strategy

By drawing symbolic representations of their interpretations of a story, students can use the "Sketch to Stretch" (STS) reading strategy to help them effectively identify the main ideas or themes of a literary work. This visual expression of a story's main ideas facilitates students' identification and understanding of symbols while allowing students to use symbols to express their personal responses to a text. Though most effective as an after-reading strategy, STS can be used as a before-reading or a during-reading strategy.

One STS response to *Wish You Well*, which the teacher can draw as an example (and which will demystify sketching), is a simple sketch of a coin. On a sheet of unlined paper, draw a circle about the size of a saucer. In the circle, sketch a simple line drawing of a face in profile, similar to the face on a quarter. The profile doesn't have to look like anyone in particular. Instead, it is supposed to symbolically represent Diamond, the mountain boy. Above the profile, print the word *LOYALTY* in capital letters in an arc that follows the edge of the coin. Below the profile, print the word *PRICELESS*. Add any other features you wish. Show this simple drawing to your class by making a transparency to project or enlarging it onto poster-board, a flip chart, or chalk / dry-erase board.

Activities for the "Sketch To Stretch" Strategy

- Have students read *Wish You Well* in its entirety, and then explain the STS reading strategy to them.

- Model the STS reading strategy by doing the following:
  1. Read aloud the model passage (chapter 18, paragraphs 20–29) about Diamond and his lump of coal.
  2. Discuss the embedded comparison of a lump of coal hiding a diamond and a rough person hiding a gem of a human. Focus on the challenge of discovering a person's — any person's — true worth with only the external form of that person as an indicator of value.
  3. Share with the students your STS drawing of the coin, which represents Diamond.
  4. Remind the students that artistic ability is not the point here, but their ability to interpret text and identify themes and symbols is the focus. Explain that your simple sketch is a symbolic representation of a main idea or theme that you identified in *Wish You Well*. The

sketch symbolically illustrates the theme that all people are of value, even those who, based upon first impressions, seem to have little to offer. Discuss how that can be true, soliciting real life examples from students.

5. Ask the students to look at a series of drawings you have created to represent various themes from three works of literature the students have read while in your class.
6. Discuss each sketch and its symbolic meaning(s), reminding the students that each drawing is a symbolic representation of a theme of a literary work, not a literal illustration of an event from the work.
7. Have the students brainstorm themes from other works the class has recently read, then select one of these themes, and suggest what they might sketch to represent the selected theme.
8. On the board, draw (or allow a volunteer to draw) the suggested sketch that symbolically represents the identified theme. Allow the students to make suggestions as you draw, but remember to keep it simple.
9. Discuss the class-generated drawing, pointing out their use of symbolism to interpret the main idea they chose to illustrate symbolically.

- For reinforcement of the STS reading strategy, have the students practice (individually, with partners, in small groups, or as a class) creating STS drawings for themes from children's literature, such as

Androcles	*The Little Mermaid*	*The Three Bears*
Beauty and the Beast	*Little Red Riding Hood*	*The Three Little Pigs*
Cinderella	*Rapunzel*	*The Tale of Peter Rabbit*
The Emperor's New Clothes	*Rumplestiltskin*	*The Ugly Duckling*
Hansel and Gretel	*Sleeping Beauty*	*The Velveteen Rabbit*

- For individual practice of the STS reading strategy, do the following:
  1. Distribute the blackline master of the STS worksheet for *Wish You Well* (see pages 76–77).
  2. Remind students that novels, including *Wish You Well*, have multiple themes, so no one right answer exists. Each individual must interpret a selection from the text, identifying a relevant theme.
  3. Have students think about their favorite passages or sections of *Wish You Well*, sharing their favorites and brainstorming until each student has a list of at least three such passages or sections. Tell them that "favorite" does not only mean best or most uplifting; it may also mean most appealing, most graphic, most memorable — for whatever reason it captures attention and holds interest.
  4. Ask students to record their three favorite passages or sections on the blackline master and then choose one with which to work in an STS exercise.
  5. Ask students to draw a symbolic representation(s) of their interpretation of the theme(s) of the passage or section. Remind them that they are not to illustrate events from the novel. Instead, they are to draw a symbolic representation(s) of their interpretation of a main idea(s) or theme(s). They may interpret the text, verbalize main ideas, make inferences, draw conclusions, form generalizations, identify cause-and-effect relationships, and summarize in order to decide what to draw to create the symbolic sketch representing their identified theme(s).
  6. Ask students to make simple line drawings or sketches only, but allow them to explore beyond those boundaries if they wish to do so.
  7. Have students share their STS drawings in groups of four to six students without making comments, allowing the others in the group to make statements about what they think the

sketches symbolize. Only after hearing the theories of their peers may the artists explain what their sketches are intended to mean.

8. In the same manner, have students share representative STS drawings with the class.
9. Discuss student interpretations of the text and emerging themes from *Wish You Well*, asking students to identify related themes and the main theme from the novel.

Assessment

Use the following rubric to assess the student's ability to identify themes and recognize / generate symbols for Sketch To Stretch drawings:

- **EXEMPLARY (Score 4):** The student can effectively interpret text and identify themes and can recognize / generate symbols that represent identified themes.
- **ACCOMPLISHED (Score 3):** The student can identify most themes and recognize / generate many symbols.
- **DEVELOPING (Score 2):** The student can identify some themes and recognize / generate some symbols.
- **BEGINNING (Score 1):** The student cannot identify themes or recognize / generate symbols.

Blackline Master

Sketch to Stretch

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

Skill: Identifying Themes and Recognizing/Generating Symbols

Part 1. List at least three memorable passages or sections from *Wish You Well*:

1. (pages _____ – _____) In this passage/section of *Wish You Well*, _____

2. (pages _____ – _____) In this passage/section of *Wish You Well*, _____

3. (pages _____ – _____) In this passage/section of *Wish You Well*, _____

Part 2. Choose a partner or work alone. Select one of the above passages or sections, one of your partner's, or one shared in class discussion to use for this exercise. Think about what the passage or section means to you. What might you draw to represent this meaning symbolically?

Part 3. On a separate sheet of paper, draw a symbolic sketch to represent what the passage or section you selected in Part 2 means to you. Be sure to incorporate the ideas you wrote down in Part 2 into your sketch.

Part 4. Write an explanation of why you drew what you drew. Give evidence from the novel to support your interpretations, opinions, and ideas.

Somebody Wanted But So

Reading Skills

- Identifying conflicts and resolutions
- Identifying character differences, goals, and motivations
- Identifying main ideas and details
- Recognizing cause-and-effect relationships
- Making generalizations
- Understanding how shifting the point of view emphasizes different aspects of a story

Correlation to Virginia's English Standards of Learning

7.1, 7.5, 7.8 • 8.3, 8.5 • 9.2, 9.3, 9.6 • 10.1, 10.3, 10.7 • 11.1, 11.3, 11.7 • 12.3, 12.7

Overview of the "Somebody Wanted But So" Strategy

Student identification of plot elements, such as conflicts and resolutions, can be facilitated by the use of the "Somebody Wanted But So" (SWBS) reading strategy. With SWBS, students complete a chart by creating a SWBS statement that identifies a character, the character's goal / motivation, a conflict that impedes the character, and the resolution of the conflict. The chart has four column headings:

Somebody (character)	Wanted (goal/motivation)	But (conflict)	So (resolution)

While the SWBS reading strategy lends itself to after reading, it can be used during the reading of specific chapters or a section of the text and with the main plot as well as subplots.

Activities for the "Somebody Wanted But So" Strategy

- Have students read *Wish You Well* in its entirety; then explain the SWBS reading strategy to them.

- Model the SWBS reading strategy by doing the following:
  1. Read aloud the model passage (chapter 23, last section) in which George Davis demands restitution for his damaged still.
  2. Ask the students to use the information from the model passage to create a written SWBS statement for George Davis, supporting their statement with evidence from the text.
  3. Ask the students to share their SWBS statements for George Davis, as in the following example:

Somebody (character)	Wanted (goal/motivation)	But (conflict)	So (resolution)
George Davis	wanted payment for his damaged still	but Louisa refused to pay	so Diamond gave George Davis his prized silver dollar.

4. Discuss differences among the student SWBS statements for George Davis.
5. Explain that there can be more than one SWBS statement for a character. Differences among SWBS statements can be attributed to the differences in the students themselves, their experiences, their viewpoints, and their personal interpretations of the passage. Differences can also be attributed to the fact that characters, like real people, may have many goals and motivations, each of which may be complicated by a conflict, some of which may remain unresolved.
6. Discuss how the SWBS chart helps readers identify conflicts and resolutions in literary works.
7. For reinforcement of the SWBS strategy, place students in small groups and have them practice creating SWBS statements for characters from television shows they have recently watched, supporting their statements with evidence from the script.
8. Have students share their SWBS statements with the class.

- For individual practice of the SWBS reading strategy, do the following:
  1. Distribute the blackline master of the SWBS charts for *Wish You Well* (see next page).
  2. Remind students that novels have multiple subplots and multiple important characters.
  3. Tell students that there are many SWBS statements for the characters of *Wish You Well.*
  4. Have students complete the SWBS charts. (Note: While Part 1 of the blackline master can be completed at any point or at multiple points during the reading of the novel, Part 2 can be completed only after reading the entire novel.)
  5. If students have difficulty completing the charts, allow them to work with partners.
  6. Have students share their SWBS statements in small groups and discuss the similarities and differences in the statements.
  7. Have each group select a representative SWBS statement to share with the class, supporting their statement with evidence from the text.
  8. Discuss the similarities and differences in the student-generated statements.
  9. Ask students to identify conflicts as resolved or unresolved.

Assessment

Use the following rubric to assess the student's ability to identify conflicts and resolutions, using "Somebody Wanted But So" Statements:

- **BEGINNING (Score 1):** The student cannot identify conflicts or resolutions.
- **DEVELOPING (Score 2):** The student can identify some conflicts and some resolutions.
- **ACCOMPLISHED (Score 3):** The student can identify most conflicts and most resolutions.
- **EXEMPLARY (Score 4):** The student can identify conflicts and label them internal / external and man vs. himself / man / society / nature / the supernatural. The student can identify conflict resolutions and unresolved conflicts.

Blackline Master

Somebody Wanted But So

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

Skill: Identifying Conflicts and Resolutions

Part 1. Identify three conflicts presented in *Wish You Well*. In the charts provided below, create "Somebody Wanted But So" statements for each section of the novel you have selected.

1. (pages _____ – _____) The conflict presented in this section of *Wish You Well* is the struggle between _____ and _____ in which (describe the conflict) _____
_____

Somebody (character)	Wanted (goal/motivation)	But (conflict)	So (resolution)

2. (pages _____ – _____) The conflict presented in this section of *Wish You Well* is the struggle between _____ and _____ in which (describe the conflict) _____
_____

Somebody (character)	Wanted (goal/motivation)	But (conflict)	So (resolution)

3. (pages _____ – _____) The conflict presented in this section of *Wish You Well* is the struggle between _____ and _____ in which (describe the conflict) _____
_____

Somebody (character)	Wanted (goal/motivation)	But (conflict)	So (resolution)

Part 2. On the remainder of this sheet, identify what you consider to be the central conflict of David Baldacci's *Wish You Well*. At the novel's end, is this conflict resolved? Explain. Could the novel have ended differently? Explain. Why do you think Baldacci ended the story as he did?

Vocabulary Strategies

Context Clues and Idiomatic Expressions

Reading Skills

- Using context clues to define idiomatic expressions
- Responding to vocabulary lessons through writing

Correlation to the Virginia English Standards of Learning

7.4, 7.8 • 8.2 • 9.4, 9.6 • 10.7 • 11.3, 11.4, 11.7

Overview of the "Context Clues and Idiomatic Expressions" Strategy

The acquisition of vocabulary knowledge is mandatory for a learner to achieve success. The successful study of vocabulary must be dynamic and ongoing. Teachers need to show the students the connection between vocabulary knowledge and reading ability. They need to seed, feed, and weed good vocabulary acquisition. Then and only then will students learn, nurture, and maintain a strong base of vocabulary knowledge.

One of the more challenging aspects of vocabulary acquisition is using context in order to clarify the meaning of a word or phrase. Quite often when confronted with an unfamiliar word within its context, students will skip over it and continue to read, or they will cease reading altogether. However, teachers can assist students' independent learning styles by showing them how to obtain the meanings of unknown words through recognizing and applying context clues. In this lesson, students will use their knowledge of context clues to gain a clearer image of each character's personality by studying the meanings of idiomatic expressions of Appalachia.

Activities for the "Context Clues and Idiomatic Expressions" Strategy

1. Prepare the students for this exercise on idiomatic expressions by introducing them to the four types of context clues that assist in students' reading comprehensively. These are highlighted on the blackline master shown on the next page.
2. Assist the students through practice with idioms. Explain to the students that an *idiom* is a group of words which, when used together, has a different meaning from the one that the individual words have. Idioms are used to express something that other words do not express as clearly or as cleverly. For example, "hearing it straight from the horse's mouth" suggests that one receives information directly from the person who performed an action. Idioms tend to be informal, allowing the reader the opportunity to obtain a more colorful perception of the characters and the region.
3. Use the blackline master on page 87 to help the students clarify idiomatic expressions. The first three sentences should be used as a warm-up activity before dividing the students into pairs in order to Think-Pair-Share. The first one is done as an example.

Blackline Master

Mastering Context Clues

The four types of context clues are:

1. Definition/Explanation Clues
Sometimes a word's or phrase's meaning is explained immediately following its use. Example:

> "*Etymology*, which is the study of the origin of words, helps students unravel the mysteries of the mountain vernacular found in novels such as *Wish You Well.*"

2. Restatement/Synonym Clues
Sometimes a challenging word or phrase is clarified in simpler language. Example:

> "Lou felt as though she had been sent to the doghouse when Louisa *admonished* her for fighting at school."

Because the phrase "being sent to the doghouse" means being punished, *admonish* could mean to disapprove or to scold.

3. Contrast/Antonym Clues
Sometimes a word or phrase is clarified by the presentation of the opposite meaning somewhere close to its use. Look for signal words when applying context clues. Example:

> "Lou thought that her mother's recovery was *futile*, but Oz remained faithful to the course of his mother's restored health."

The signal word *but* tells the reader that an opposite, contrasting thought is occurring. Consequently, *futile* must mean the opposite of remaining faithful to the course; therefore, it must mean giving up.

4. Inference/General Context Clues
Sometimes a word or phrase is not immediately clarified within the same sentence. Relationships, which are not directly apparent, are inferred or implied. The reader must look for clues within, before, and after the sentence in which the word is used. Example:

> "*Dementia* almost overcame Lou when she stepped off the train at Rainwater Ridge and felt as crazy as a betsy bug as she realized how different her new life would be."

Dementia can be defined as being insane because the phrase "as crazy as a betsy bug" indicates insanity. Another example:

> The nurse in *Wish You Well* states that she would "...require *a free reign* in overseeing the children. These two need discipline, and I intend to provide it."

The idiomatic phrase, "a free reign," can be defined by looking for clues in the second sentence. The nurse wants the freedom to discipline the two children her way because she has noticed how undisciplined they already are, and she is determined to provide it all by herself.

Blackline Master

Analyzing Idiomatic Expressions

Part 1. Before we begin to analyze the meaning of various idiomatic expressions in David Baldacci's novel *Wish You Well*, we need to practice analyzing the meanings of some common ones. Read each statement and decide the meaning of the italicized phrase. The first one is done as an example.

1. He was *on the carpet* for not finishing his essay on Baldacci.
   Definition: *on the carpet* means in trouble.
   Explanation: Because he had not finished his essay on time, he was going to be in trouble.
   Context Clue: **Inference** (The words *not finishing* infer getting into trouble.)

2. Her impressive PowerPoint presentation on Appalachian dialect *swept the teacher off her feet*.
   Definition:
   Explanation:
   Context Clue:

3. Although getting lost caused the adventure into the woods to *get off on the wrong foot*, Lou and Oz ended up having a wonderful experience once Diamond found them.
   Definition:
   Explanation:
   Context Clue:

Part 2. In order to present a clearer image of Appalachian life during the 1930s, David Baldacci employs many idiomatic expressions in *Wish You Well*. Read each of the following quotations, and think about the definition of each italicized idiomatic expression. Analyze the expression by supplying its definition, explanation, and context clue. Then share your thoughts with your partner.

1. "They's the toughest things God ever made, and them durn critters keep grudges *till kingdom come*. Don't never forget one smack of the whip, or slip of a shoeing nail."
   Analyze the idiomatic expression *till kingdom come*:
   Definition:
   Explanation:
   Context Clue:

2. "'Because I'm tired of dirt and mules and manure and hauling water,' said Lou. She patted her pocket. 'And because I've got twenty dollars I brought with me from New York that's *burning a hole in my pocket*,' she added, staring at him."
   Analyze the idiomatic expression *burning a hole in my pocket*:
   Definition:
   Explanation:
   Context Clue:

3. "And most of the businesses here rely on those people spending those mining dollars. If that goes away, then it might not seem so prosperous anymore. A *house of cards* falls swiftly."
   Analyze the idiomatic expression a *house of cards*:
   Definition:
   Explanation:
   Context Clue:

4. “Lou said, ‘Diamond, tell me why you put horse manure in that man’s car.’
   ‘Can’t tell you, ‘cause I ain’t do it.’
   ‘Diamond, come on. You as good as admitted you did to Cotton.’
   ‘Got me *oak ears*, can’t hear nuthin’ you saying.’”
   Analyze the idiomatic expression *oak ears*:
   Definition:
   Explanation:
   Context Clue:

5. “‘They have more fields and livestock than we do,’ Lou said. ‘So how come they don’t have anything to eat?’
   ‘Cause their daddy want it that way. Tight with a dollar. Didn’t let none go till *his feet wedged agin root*.’”
   Analyze the idiomatic expression *his feet wedged agin root*:
   Definition:
   Explanation:
   Context Clue:

6. “The barn was fully ablaze. Lou and Oz hauled buckets of water from the springhouse, but Lou knew it was like *trying to melt snow with your breath*.”
   Analyze he idiomatic expression *trying to melt snow with your breath*:
   Definition:
   Explanation:
   Context Clue:

Part 3. Writing: With your partner, compare/contrast the way in which Diamond, Lou, Oz, Cotton, and Eugene celebrate Independence Day to the way the two of you normally experience July 4. Use four idiomatic expressions when describing the two celebrations.
(Teacher’s note: Use the following rubrics to score the writing.)

Secondary English Writing Rubrics

(adapted from the Virginia Secondary English Writing Rubrics shown on pages 110–111)

	Score 4	Score 3	Score 2	Score 1	Score 0
Composing	Writer demonstrates consistent control of composing domain: • Central idea is sharply focused with key examples, illustrations, reasons, events, and/or details. • Transitions logically connect above elements both within paragraphs and across entire piece. • Organization is strong and apparent. • Unity of elements occurs with consistent point of view and without digressions. • Logic is evident. • Introduction and closure are strong.	Writer demonstrates reasonable control of composing domain but has some inconsistent features: • Central idea is clearly focused and partially elaborated with key examples, illustrations, reasons, events, and/or details. • Transitions are appropriate. • Organization is somewhat apparent. • Unity is present but occasionally lacks coherence and cohesiveness. • Shifts in point of view and digressions from the topic are few. • Introduction and closure may lack sophistication.	Writer demonstrates inconsistent control of composing domain and has weaknesses in the following areas: • Central idea lacks focus and shows little elaboration. Instead it lists general, undeveloped statements or a skeleton of a narrative. • Reasons are unelaborated. • Organization is weak. • Unity is lacking. • No central idea is evident. • Introduction and closure may be present but are ineffective.	Writer demonstrates little control of composing domain and has weaknesses in all areas: • Central idea lacks sufficient focus. • Organization is not apparent. • Writing jumps from point to point with no elaboration. • Details are haphazardly presented. • Introduction and closure are not present.	Writer demonstrates no control of the composing domain. There is/are no • central idea • organization • elaboration • details • introduction • conclusion.
Written Expression	Writer demonstrates consistent control of this domain: • Information is very precise. • Vocabulary is enhanced, and word choice is highly specific. • Tone is purposeful. • Writer's voice is present. • Figurative language is appropriately used. • Varied sentence length and subordinated ideas create a rhythmic flow.	Writer demonstrates reasonable but inconsistent control of this domain: • Information is clear with word choice specific. • Figurative language is occasionally present. • Tone and voice are present but somewhat flattened. • Figurative language is occasionally present. • Word order is effective. • Sentence length is varied and rarely awkward.	Writer demonstrates many weaknesses in this domain: • Information is uneven. Word choice is imprecise and bland. • Tone and voice are present occasionally. • Sentence variety is generally non-existent. • Some awkward sentence constructions distract from meaning.	Writer demonstrates little or no control in this domain: • Information is general with vague word choice and repetition. • Sentence variety is nonexistent. • Tone and voice emerge rarely. • Awkward constructions distract from meaning.	Writer demonstrates no control of this domain: • Information is sketchy. • Word choice is bland and repetitive. • Sentences lack variety. • Tone and voice are flat. • Awkward constructions prevent meaning from emerging.
Usage/Mechanics	Writer demonstrates consistent control of domain's features: • Usage and mechanics as specified by VA K-11 SOL are thoroughly demonstrated. • Correct capitalization, punctuation, usage, sentence formation, and structural principles of spelling are present. • Mistakes do not detract from writing performance even though a few errors may be present.	Writer demonstrates reasonable but inconsistent control of domain's features: • Usage and mechanics as specified by VA K-11 SOL are basically demonstrated. • Correct capitalization, punctuation sentence formation, and structural principles of spelling are present to the expectation of high school students. • Most errors are not elementary ones.	Writer demonstrates an inconsistent control and significant weaknesses in several domain features: • Usage and mechanics show frequent errors in capitalization, punctuation, sentence formation, and structural principles of spelling, as specified by VA K-11 SOL. • This inconsistency may also show a lack of control, making it difficult to follow the writer's thoughts.	Writer demonstrates little or no control of most of domain's features: • Usage and mechanics show frequent and severe errors, as specified by VA K-11 SOL, making the paper difficult to understand. • Density and variety of errors overwhelm performance and keep the paper from meeting standards of competence.	Writer demonstrates no control of domain's features: • Usage and mechanics show severe errors, as specified by the VA K-11 SOL. The paper is not understandable. • In some cases, not enough has been written for the writer to demonstrate control of this domain.

Vocabulary Journal

Reading Skills

- Clarifying words or phrases as seen in context of novel
- Organizing vocabulary acquisition through a graphic organizer

Correlation to the Virginia English Standards of Learning

7.4 • 8.2 • 9.4 • 11.3 • 12.4

Overview of the "Vocabulary Journal" Strategy

Students acquire and retain knowledge of vocabulary in various ways. An effective method is through a vocabulary journal. In this lesson, students will clarify unfamiliar words or phrases by listing them on a chart in their journals. They write what they perceive is the definition by reading and recognizing clues within the sentence or surrounding sentences. They note the type of context clue they used in order to derive the meaning of the word or phrase. This activity should be introduced and applied in conjunction with the lesson on idiomatic expressions.

Activity for the "Vocabulary Journal" Strategy

Prepare the students for this activity by reviewing how to clarify for meaning when confronting unfamiliar words or phrases within the context of the novel *Wish You Well*. Then have them maintain a vocabulary journal as they read the novel, using and filling out copies of the following blackline master.

Blackline Master

Vocabulary Journal

Directions: As you read *Wish You Well,* fill in this graphic organizer by jotting down words or phrases that you clarify.

Word/Phrase (page #)	What I think it means	Context Clues

Blackline Master

Vocabulary from the Novel *Wish You Well* by David Baldacci

Words are listed by chapter in their order of their appearance.

Chapter 1
embedded
apportioned
skittish
alchemy
volatile

Chapter 2
emboldened
conciliatory
crypt

Chapter 3
enigmatic
executor
ecclesiastical

Chapter 4
enthralled
incantations
craggy
catatonic
incriminate
pedantic

Chapter 9
effusive
ferrotypes
drugget

Chapter 10
facet
pungent
accommodation

Chapter 11
taunting
feigned
antagonist

Chapter 12
illumination
moniker
dubious

Chapter 15
clapboard
scintillating
audacity

Chapter 5
peneplain
shrouded
trestle

Chapter 6
rankling
assiduously
portico
pediment
ostensibly
chastened

Chapter 7
gambrel
portal

Chapter 8
proximity
perplexed
reincarnations
dormant
grimace

Chapter 18
immense
caliper
remotely
macadam

Chapter 19
vigilant
ridgeline

Chapter 23
plummeted
phosphorus rock

Chapter 24
vaudeville
gramophone
carbide

Chapter 29
maelstrom
concussive

Chapter 31
bludgeoning
gape

Chapter 32
extraction
prowess

Chapter 33
thrashed
rousted

Word Mapping

Reading Skills

- Clarifying words or phrases as seen in context of novel
- Organizing vocabulary acquisition through a graphic organizer
- Comparing words or phrases to a known object through the use of the word *like*
- Furnishing antonyms and synonyms for key words
- Connecting a word's meaning to characters in the novel

Correlation to the Virginia English Standards of Learning

7.4 • 8.2 • 9.4 • 11.3, 11.4

Overview of the "Word Mapping" Strategy

Students acquire and retain knowledge of vocabulary in various ways. An effective method is through word mapping, in which students enhance their understanding of key words by graphically mapping them.

For example, on the first map shown on the next page, students will map a word's meaning as derived from its context. Then, they will present a figurative meaning for the word by comparing it to a known object. Finally, they will connect the word's meaning to three different characters who illustrate its use. On the second map, students will study a word's meaning and then supply three antonyms, three synonyms, and three characters who illustrate its meaning.

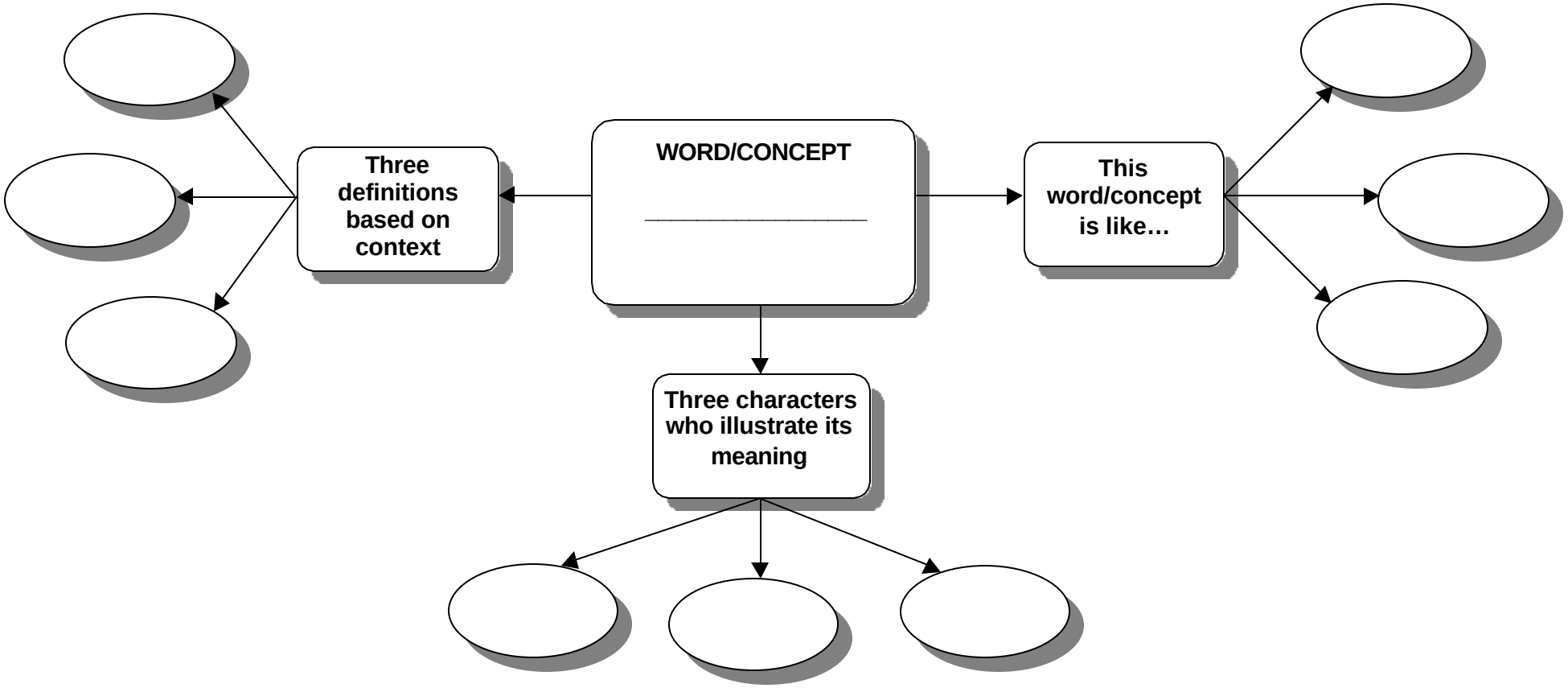
Some key words to be defined could be *family*, *pride*, *respect*, *hope*, *tenacity*, *knowledge*, and *ethics*. Whatever is chosen to be defined should be connected to one of the themes of *Wish You Well*. These activities should be introduced and applied in conjunction with the lesson on context clues and idiomatic expressions.

Activity for the "Word Mapping" Strategy

Prepare the students for this activity by reviewing how to clarify for meaning when confronting unfamiliar words within the context of the novel. Model a mapping process before having students map independently. Then have them map key words, using the following blackline masters.

Blackline Master

Word Mapping

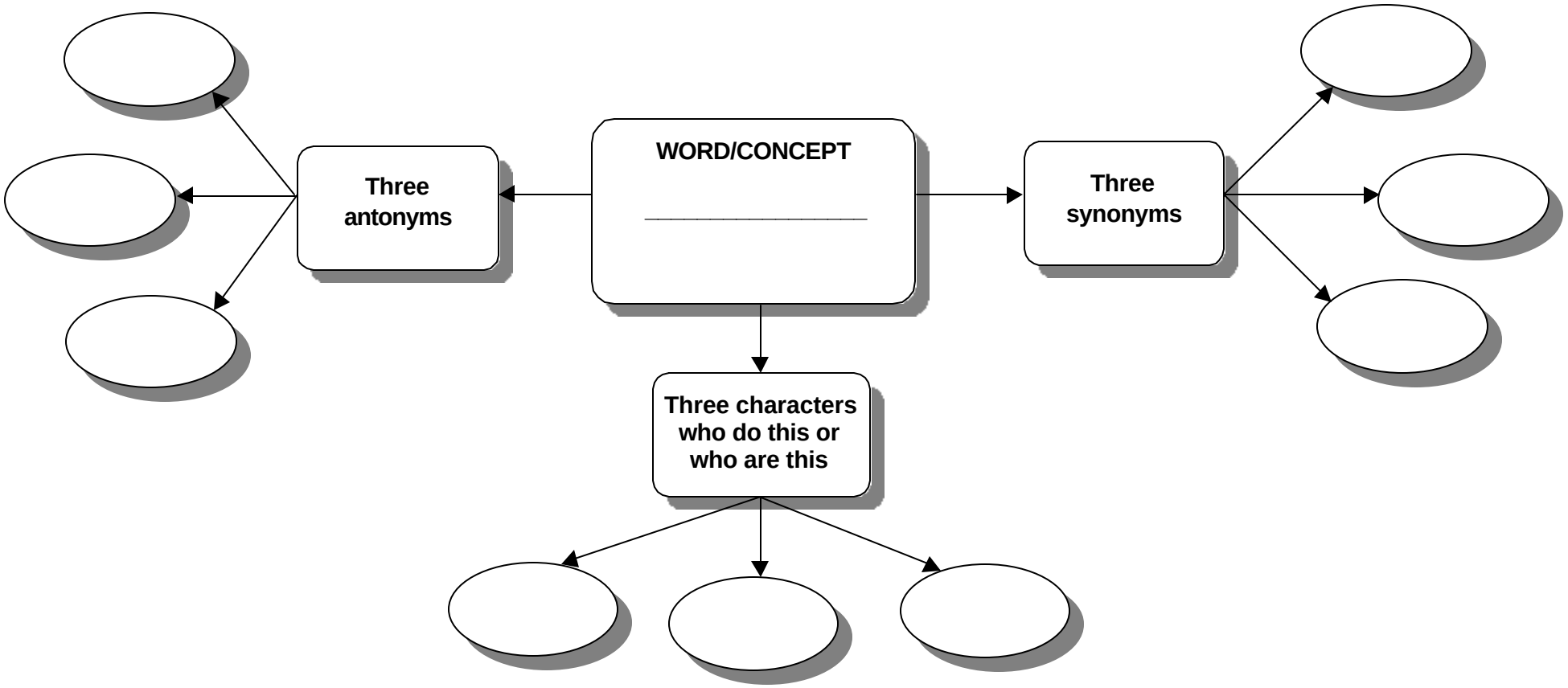


How to complete this word map

1. Enter selected word/concept in the center box.
2. Think about the meaning of this word/concept. Then list three different ways this word/concept is used within the context of this novel.
3. Tell what this word/concept is like.
4. List three main characters who illustrate the basic meaning of this word/concept.

Blackline Master

Word Mapping



How to complete this word map

1. Enter selected word and its meaning in the center box.
2. List three antonyms.
3. List three synonyms.
4. List three main characters who illustrate the basic meaning of this word/concept.

Writing Activities and Resources

Class Book

Writing Skills

- Using interviewing techniques to gain information
- Developing narratives
- Using word processor to publish writing

Correlation to the Virginia English Standards of Learning

7.1, 7.8, 7.9 • 8.1, 8.3, 8.5 • 9.6

Overview of the "Class Book" Strategy

By engaging in this strategy, students will not only link with past generations but will also experience the writing process. As the novel *Wish You Well* is based on oral history collected by author David Baldacci, so also may a "Class Book" be based on oral histories collected by students from adults they know. Once the histories have been collected, each student will choose a favorite recollection, turn it into a narrative, and contribute it to a class book named, for example, *Tales to Remember*. This book will undergo the publishing phases and may be shared by distributing copies to the authors.

Activities for the "Class Book" Strategy

1. Have students gather and record oral histories from adult family members or adult friends.
2. Have each student write a narrative/short story based on one of the gathered oral histories.
3. Allow the students to share their stories.
4. Have the students contribute their stories to a class book by editing and formatting them correctly, using word processing software.
5. Assist the students in publishing the class book, assuring that all stories are formatted consistently and appropriately.

Assessment

Use the rubric shown on the next page to assess the stories.

Assessment Rubric for Class Book Stories			
"A"	**"B"**	**"C"**	**"D"**
• Captures reader's attention from first sentence, paragraph, or line, making reader want to continue reading. • Is an interesting use of ideas, language, character development, imagery. • Has clarity, leaving no questions in reader's mind. • Contains no errors in grammar, usage, or mechanics, aside from those intentionally used for artistic purposes.	• Gets reader's attention with first sentence, paragraph, or line, drawing reader into rest of piece. • Is interesting most of the way through because of use of ideas, language, character development, imagery. • Has clarity, leaving only a few questions in reader's mind. • Contains a few minor errors in grammar, usage, or mechanics, aside from those intentionally used for artistic purposes.	• Doesn't get reader's attention quickly. First sentence, paragraph, or line lacks excitement to draw reader into piece. Reader may not keep reading. • Offers little originality in ideas, language, imagery. Reader may lose interest. • Leaves several questions in reader's mind. • Contains many and / or serious errors in grammar, usage, or mechanics. Errors may interfere with reading.	• Doesn't get reader's attention quickly. First sentence, paragraph, or line not only lacks excitement but also contains a cliché idea / image or no ideas or images. • Lacks originality in ideas, language, imagery. Reader will not want to read past first few sentences. • Contains serious gaps that leave reader baffled. • Contains so many errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics that errors block reading.

Extended-Definition Paper

Writing Skill

- Analyzing and writing about specific passages of literature

Correlation to the Virginia English Standards of Learning

7.8, 7.9 • 8.5 • 9.6 • 10.7 • 11.7 • 12.7

Overview of the "Extended-Definition Paper" Strategy

One form of expository writing is the extended-definition paper. In it, the writer attempts to define a concept by using examples, comparison/contrast, illustrative description, or other methods. In this writing exercise, the students will be defining the concept of violence as it relates to greed.

In the novel *Wish You Well*, several misdeeds by the Southern Valley Coal and Gas Company are discovered. Tell the students that they will be writing a carefully prepared essay in which they outline the reasons why one person should be charged with these misdeeds and that they will define the concept of violence as it relates to greed. Show the students a list of the five writing steps as you work through the activity below.

Activity for the "Extended-Definition Paper" Strategy

1. **Prewriting:** This is the thinking and planning part of the process. Tell the students to begin by gathering information/evidence from the book in preparation for formal charges against a person responsible for the misdeeds. Ask: Who should receive the warrant? Remind them to include the page number(s) with each note they make. Have the students make a list of examples of greed and violence in the novel. Have them write next to each example the name of the character who is involved. Who is the audience for this essay?
2. **Organizing:** In this step, have the students arrange their facts and ideas, putting a star next to the actions that are in some way connected. Are the same people involved in the conflict? In what order would you place the actions? Ask the students to decide which person or persons they want to use in their paper. Ask: Do you have enough information on this person(s)? What tone (e.g., serious, persuasive, humorous) do you plan to use?
3. **Writing:** In this step, have the students compose and combine the facts and ideas into clearly written sentences and paragraphs and write the rough draft of the paper.
4. **Editing:** In this step, ask the students to examine the rough draft to correct and improve their paper. Do you like the order you chose for the paper, or do ideas need to be moved to a different place or eliminated? Is there a better way to express your idea? Do some words need to be changed? Have them check for errors in grammar and mechanics.
5. **Rewriting:** In this step, have the students use their revisions and corrections to write a final draft of their essay.

Assessment

Use the Virginia Secondary English Writing Rubrics shown on pages 110–111.

Essay Questions and Rubrics

Writing Skill

- Analyzing and writing about specific passages of literature

Correlation to the Virginia English Standards of Learning

7.8 • 8.3, 8.5 • 9.3, 9.6 • 10.3, 10.7, 10.8, 10.9 • 12.7

Overview of the "Essay Questions and Rubrics" Strategy

Each activity listed below asks students to read specific passages from *Wish You Well*, analyze the text for elements of literature in response to a particular question, and then write about those elements in a clear, well-developed essay. These activities could be used during the reading of the novel or after the reading is completed. Students are asked to focus on specific techniques that are developed within the short passages. Students should be encouraged to use sticky notes for annotations about pertinent passages in the book before they begin writing their essays.

Activities for the "Essay Questions and Rubrics" Strategy

1. Have the students read carefully the first section of chapter 1, ending with "Go away, storm, please go away now." Tell the students to write an essay in which they answer the following question: How does Baldacci use organization, details, and imagery to define the narrator's attitude toward the characters?
2. Have the students read the third section of chapter 15, beginning with "The school day ended at three,..."Ask the students to write a well-developed essay in which they answer the following question: How does Baldacci use language, details, and point of view to enrich the reader's sense of Lou's childhood?
3. Have the students read the first section of chapter 29, ending with "...her walls covering them all." Direct the students to write a well-organized essay in which they answer the following question: What effect does the passage have on the reader, and what techniques does Baldacci use to achieve that effect? Remind the students to consider such aspects as organization, point of view, language, and use of detail.

Assessment

Use the Virginia Secondary English Writing Rubrics shown on pages 110–111.

Another Essay Question

Reading/Writing Skills

- Identifying conflicts and resolutions
- Identifying character differences, goals, and motivations
- Recognizing / analyzing cause-and-effect relationships
- Making generalizations
- Forming generalizations
- Creating summaries
- Determining writer's purpose
- Visualizing the text
- Identifying literary elements
- Making connections
- Drawing conclusions

Correlation to the Virginia English Standards of Learning

7.8, 7.9 • 8.5 • 9.6 • 10.7 • 11.7 • 12.7

Overview of the "Essay Question" Strategy

The setting plays an important role in David Baldacci's *Wish You Well*. After all, it is the main reason that Lou and Oz find themselves in a courtroom drama at the end of the novel. In this activity, students will be asked to focus on the setting of the novel and write an essay on how it impacts some of the characters. Using what they learn, the students will be able to make connections between the impact of setting in the text and in the real world.

Activity for the "Essay Question" Strategy

1. Discuss with the students the purpose of the setting in the novel. Ask the question: How does the setting affect the way the characters act and respond?
2. Have the students choose three characters from the novel and ask them to write a well-organized essay in which they discuss the impact of the setting on each character. Instruct them to cite specific instances and examples where their characters either are in conflict with the setting or grow to understand it.

Assessment

Much of this essay will be scored on ideas. In the following rubric, each criterion is worth ten points.

Composing

_____ The student provides a dynamic beginning that introduces the importance of setting in Baldacci's novel.
_____ The student shows organization throughout the body of his or her essay.
_____ The student elaborates on each character and the impact of the setting on him or her.
_____ The student makes transitions between paragraphs, linking all the characters together.

_____ The student writes a strong conclusion that discusses the overall effects of the setting on each character.

Written Expression

_____ The student uses clear and concise word choice to describe the impact of the setting on each character.
_____ The student has a specific voice.
_____ The student varies the beginnings of his or her sentences.

Usage and Mechanics

_____ The student punctuates and capitalizes each sentence correctly.
_____ The student shows evidence of correct usage.

Blackline Master

General Writing Assignments

Directions

Use the three accompanying rubrics shown on the following pages to complete one of more of these writing assignments:

1. Put yourself in the place of Lou after Diamond's death. Write a journal entry like one she might have written. (Use the "Argumentative Writing: Analytic Rubric" that follows.)

2. Write an essay explaining why or how Diamond is "funny" or "endearing." (Use the "Argumentative Writing: Analytic Rubric" that follows.)

3. Imagining that you are Louisa, write a letter of complaint to the coal company in regard to their trespassing on your property. (Use the "Business Letter: Primary Trait Rubric" that follows.)

4. Research the railroad and the coal companies of the period, and write a paper that illustrates the benefits and/or damages that they brought to certain areas of the state. Use printed sources as well as interview and Internet sources. (Use the "Documented Essay: Primary Trait Rubric" that follows.)

5. Research race relations of the time period, and apply this information to analyze and write an essay about the character Eugene. Use printed sources as well as interview and Internet sources. (Use the "Documented Essay: Primary Trait Rubric" that follows.)

6. Imagine you are one of the characters in *Wish You Well*. Choose one event in the story, and describe it from that character's point of view. (Use the "Argumentative Writing: Analytic Rubric" that follows.)

7. Select your favorite character from the novel, and explain why he or she is your favorite. (Use the "Argumentative Writing: Analytic Rubric" that follows.)

8. Compare and contrast your way of life with your favorite character's way of life. Consider such items as living conditions, emotions, events. (Use the "Argumentative Writing: Analytic Rubric" that follows.)

9. Imagine you are one of the characters in the novel. As that character, write a letter to another character in the story. (Use the "Argumentative Writing: Analytic Rubric" that follows.)

10. Do a quote search to find all relevant quotes pertaining to an important setting in the novel. Write each quote, its page number(s), and an explanation of its importance. Choose from one the following settings: Louisa's home, the fields, the wishing well, the courtroom, Dickens, Diamond's home, or the graveyard.

11. Make a family tree that depicts the relationships among all the characters in the novel.

Argumentative Writing: Analytic Rubric

Standard
To convince the reader to consider an opinion

Scoring Guide
Each category is rated 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest).

Statement of Opinion _____ **of 5**
- States opinion in the first paragraph
- Asserts an arguable position
- Provides a clear, specific, and elaborated focus for the essay

Arguments and Explanations _____ **of 5**
- Supports opinion with clear and compelling reasons
- Provides detailed, specific explanations of reasons

Opposing Point of View _____ **of 5**
- Acknowledges other point(s) of view
- Addresses and refutes arguments in other point(s) of view

Tone _____ **of 5**
- Chooses precise and appropriate words
- Reflects awareness of audience through use of appropriate voice

Language Control _____ **of 5**
- Makes few or no errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics

Total: _____ of 25

Business Letter: Primary Trait Rubric

Standard
To write a clear, well-organized business letter for a specific audience.

Criteria
- Clear articulation of writer's purpose and expectations
- Awareness of audience as expressed through appropriate choice of language, tone, and conventions of formal correspondence

Scoring Guide

5 The letter has a clear purpose and intended audience. The content is clearly written and reflects elaboration of ideas and specific details. Ideas are well organized, making it understandable to the reader. The tone is appropriate to the audience. There are no language-usage errors. The format employs conventions of business writing, including appropriate letterhead.

4 The letter has a clear purpose and intended audience. The content is clear and well organized but lacks appropriate elaboration and detail. The tone is appropriate to the audience. There may be a few minor language-usage errors. The format employs conventions of business writing, including appropriate letterhead.

3 The purpose of the letter is somewhat unclear, although information is provided. The letter is organized, although content may be undeveloped and/or contain irrelevant information. The letter contains some errors in language usage, and the use of appropriate tone may be inconsistent. The format may contain errors in presentation.

2 The purpose of the letter is not clear. The organization and language usage may impede communication. The format is not standard for business.

1 The letter lacks a clear purpose and organization. The language is inappropriate, and the format is incorrect.

Documented Essay: Primary Trait Rubric

Criteria

- Thesis statement
- Synthesis of information
- Evidence of research
- Correct documentation
- Awareness of audience
- Language control

Scoring Guide

6 **Elaborated Discussion.** Essay has a clear thesis and includes a broad range of researched information. Information, ideas, and relationships are well developed, with explanations and supporting details. Sources are appropriately documented. The paper demonstrates strong language control, and voice/tone are appropriate for audience and topic. There are almost no mechanical and usage errors.

5 **Developed Discussion.** Essay includes a broad range of researched information. Information, ideas, and relationships are explained and supported. Sources are appropriately documented. Paragraphs are well formed, but the essay may lack an overriding sense of purpose, audience, or cohesion. Essay demonstrates good language control but may not be as strong as a "6" paper. There may be a few errors in mechanics, usage, or sentence structure, but they do not interfere with communication.

4 **Discussion.** Essay includes a broad range of information, but information, ideas, and relationships may lack development. Essay may contain a few errors in documentation. Paragraphs may be well formed, but the essay lacks an overriding sense of purpose, audience, and cohesion. There may be consistent errors in mechanics, usage, or sentence structure, but they do not interfere with communication.

3 **Undeveloped Discussion.** Essay includes a broad range of information and some of the ideas or pieces of information are related. The ideas may be confusing, contradictory, out of sequence, illogical, and/or undeveloped. Essay may contain consistent errors in documentation. Essay lacks a sense of purpose, audience, and cohesion. Generally, the writing demonstrates weak control of such elements as word choice and organization. Errors in mechanics, usage, or sentence structure occasionally interfere with communication.

2 **Attempted Discussion.** Essay includes limited range of information. The ideas are confusing, contradictory, out of sequence, illogical, and undeveloped. There are few explanations or details. Documentation may be missing or error-ridden. Errors in mechanics, usage, and sentence structure may interfere with communication.

1 **Listing.** Essay lists pieces of information on the same topic, but does not relate or clearly connect these pieces of information to each other. No outside sources are used. Consistent errors in mechanics, usage, and sentence structure interfere with communication.

Newspaper Article

Writing Skill

- Developing technical writing skills

Correlation to the Virginia English Standards of Learning

7.8 • 8.5 • 9.6 • 10.7 • 11.7

Overview of the "Newspaper Article" Strategy

In this activity, the students will write newspaper articles that "report" the ending of the book, choosing to focus on a particular aspect of it. In the process, they will answer *who, what, when, where,* and *how*. They will "interview" characters involved in the plot and/or real persons who may be "experts" on the chosen aspect and are able to offer insights into it. They will create a writing style appropriate to a newspaper story.

Activity for the "Newspaper Article" Strategy

1. As preparation for the activity, have the students clip out and bring in several short newspaper articles that report a national or international event. Have them write down the *who, what, when, where,* and *how* of their articles.
2. Select some of these articles to be shared with the class, discussing the general characteristics of good headlines, good lead sentences/paragraphs, paragraphing, and how the writers incorporated the *who, what, when, where,* and *how* in their stories.
3. Next have the students choose the subject of the newspaper article they will write about the ending of *Wish You Well*: they may choose to write about the miraculous recovery of Amanda, the death of Louisa, the marriage of Amanda and Cotton, Oscar as a baseball player, or the results of the trial.
4. Have the students **gather the facts** (Step 1). Remind them to
   - answer the *who, what, when, where,* and *how*
   - pretend to interview characters who are involved in the story or individuals who may be experts on the chosen subject
   - be sure to write down an interviewee's exact words if they plan to quote.
5. Have the students **write a lead** (Step 2). Tell them to
   - write the first sentence or paragraph of their news story
   - be sure this first sentence or paragraph tells the basic idea of the story and grabs the attention of the reader.
6. Have the students **write the body of the story** (Step 3). Ask them to
   - fill in the details about the idea presented in their first paragraph or sentence.
7. Have the students **write a headline for the story** (Step 4). Challenge them to
   - compose a headline that is interesting enough to catch the reader's attention immediately.

Blackline Master

Writing Prompts

1. What do you believe is the cause of Amanda's illness? How do feel that she will be able to overcome her situation? Cite events in chronological order, and discuss the progression of her physical impairment to its present state.

2. Compare and contrast the school environment experienced by Lou and Oz. How is their new school like and unlike their former school? How are they treated by their new classmates? How does Lou adapt to the changes? What advice do you feel that Lou and Oz should be given to help them access what they need academically?

3. Discuss the children's adventure as they traveled to Dickens. Why is it important for Lou to go through so much trouble to get to Dickens? What are the basic lessons learned by the children from their escapade?

4. There are obviously different levels of poverty in the towns in and around Louisa Mae Cardinal. In a well-written paper, discuss the economic situations of at least four people in the story. How do their issues differ from the issues faced by Louisa? Is there a solution to the problem that will satisfy all of the persons concerned?

5. Tragedy strikes Lou in several different forms. In a well-written paper, validate this statement by using specific examples from the novel.

6. Is it possible that the story told by Diamond about the wishing well is in some way connected to rumors about Jack Cardinal's parents? Do you believe that Diamond ever used the well?

7. At one point in the story, the people on the mountain show an enormous amount of support for one of their own. What has happened? Discuss the cause of the need for the support and the implications the actions may have on Lou.

8. What is the significance of the letter written by Jack Cardinal when he was fifteen? What is the relevance of the letter to Lou and Louisa? What questions are answered by reading the letter?

9. In the midst of confusion, Lou's assistance in bringing a child into the world touches the heart of two unlikely people. Who are they? How will the relationship with these people change?

10. Write an ending to the novel that will explain what happens to George Davis after the trial has ended. Be sure to include all of the characters needed to bring closure to the person he has become at the end of the novel.

11. Louisa explains to Lou that "she must learn the land" before she can write about it. At which point in the story do you believe Lou achieves this goal? Cite specific examples from the novel to support your belief.

(Teacher's note: Papers written in response to these prompts can be assessed by using the Virginia Secondary English Writing Rubrics on the following pages.)

Virginia Secondary English Writing Rubrics

Composing Rubric

Score 4: The writer demonstrates consistent, though not necessarily perfect, control of the composing domain's features. The piece is generally unified in that all of the parts contribute to the creation of a dominant impression or idea. The sharply focused central idea is fully, but not exhaustively, elaborated with key examples, illustrations, reasons, events, and/or details. In all successful responses, layers of elaboration are present. Surface signals, such as transitions, logically connect their respective statements into the whole of the paper. In all types of writing, a strong organizational plan is apparent. Any minor organizational lapses that occur do not significantly detract from the presentation. The writing provides evidence of unity by exhibiting a consistent point of view (e.g., not switching from "I" to "you"), a lack of digressions, appropriate transitions both within paragraphs and across the entire piece, the presence of careful logic, and a strong lead and closure.

Score 3: The writer demonstrates reasonable, but not consistent, control of the composing domain's features; the writer may control some features more than others. The clearly focused central idea is purposefully elaborated with key examples, illustrations, reasons, events, and/or details. Occasionally, some thinness or unevenness in elaboration may occur. In all types of writing, an organizational plan is apparent. Any minor organizational lapses that occur do not significantly detract from the piece. Although there may be occasional lapses in coherence or cohesiveness, unity is evidenced by the fact that few, if any, digressions or shifts in point of view occur. Transitions are, on the whole, appropriate. The opening and closing show some skill but not the sophistication of a 4 performance.

Score 2: The writer demonstrates inconsistent control of several features, indicating significant weakness in the composing domain. At this score point, ideas often compete, or no one idea emerges as central. Even if a single idea dominates, the paper may lack focus because of little or no elaboration. The paper may be a list of general, underdeveloped statements, or it may be the skeleton of a narrative. In the case of persuasive writing, it may consist of a few unelaborated reasons accompanied by inappropriate attempts (begging, pleading, negotiating) to persuade. Typically, the writer extends ideas with a few brief details and moves on, though chunks of irrelevant material may appear as well. Often, no more than a hint of organization is apparent. Even though an opening and closing may be present, the lack of a logically elaborated central idea prevents unity from emerging.

Score 1: The writer demonstrates little or no control of most of the composing domain's features. The focus on a central idea is lacking, or the piece is so sparse that the presence of a clear focus is insufficient for it to earn a higher score. Typically, the writing jumps from point to point without a unifying central idea. No overall organizational strategy is apparent. The writing seems haphazard, and sentences can be rearranged without substantially changing the meaning. Bare statement is the norm, but even in responses that are several pages long, no purposeful elaboration is present.

Written Expression Rubric

Score 4: The writer demonstrates consistent, though not necessarily perfect, control of the written expression domain's features. The result is a purposefully crafted message that the reader remembers, primarily because its precise information and vocabulary resonate as images in the reader's mind. Highly specific word choice and information also create a purposeful tone in the writing and enhance the writer's voice. If metaphors, similes, personification, or other examples of figurative language are present, they are appropriate to the purpose of the piece. The writer repeats or varies sentence construction for effect and appropriately subordinates ideas and embeds modifiers on a regular basis, resulting in a rhythmic flow throughout the piece.

Score 3: The writer demonstrates reasonable, but not consistent, control of the written expression domain's features. On the whole, specific word choice and information cause the message to be clear; occasionally, a few examples of vivid or purposeful figurative language may be present. Along with instances of successful control, some general statements or vague words may be present, flattening the tone and voice of the piece somewhat. Overall, the writing is characterized by a smooth rhythm created by the effective use of normal word order and competent variation in sentence length and complexity. An occasional awkward construction or the lack of structural complexity is not distracting.

Score 2: The writer demonstrates inconsistent control of several features, indicating significant weakness in the written expression domain. Some specificity of word choice might exist, but generally the piece is written in imprecise, bland language. As a result, the writer's voice rarely emerges. The selection of information may be uneven and/or consist of an attempt to tell everything that the writer knows about a topic. A relative lack of sentence variety may make reading monotonous, and occasional awkward constructions may be distracting enough to

make the writer's meaning unclear. While a few brief rhythmic clusters of sentences may occur, an overall sense of rhythmic flow is not present.

Score 1: The writer demonstrates little or no control of most of the written expression domain's features. Both word choice and information are general, vague, and/or repetitive. A lack of sentence variety makes the presentation monotonous. The existence of several extremely awkward constructions reduces the paper's stylistic effect. The writer's lack of control of vocabulary and information prevents both tone and voice from emerging.

Usage/Mechanics Rubric

Score 4: The writer demonstrates consistent, though not necessarily perfect, control of the domain's features of usage/mechanics. The writing demonstrates a thorough understanding of usage and mechanics, as specified in the Virginia K-11 SOL. The author demonstrates capitalization, punctuation, usage, and sentence formation and applies the structural principles of spelling. A few errors in usage and mechanics may be present; however, the writer's control of the domain's many features is too strong for these mistakes to detract from the performance.

Score 3: The writer demonstrates reasonable, but not consistent, control of most of the domain's features of usage/mechanics. The writing demonstrates a basic understanding of usage and mechanics, as specified in the Virginia K-11 SOL. For the most part, the author appropriately applies both the rules of capitalization, punctuation, usage, and sentence formation and the structural principles of spelling expected of high school students. Most of the errors contained in the piece are not elementary ones.

Score 2: The writer demonstrates inconsistent control of several features, indicating significant weakness in the domain of usage/mechanics. Evidence of the author's knowledge of features of this domain appears alongside frequent errors. In terms of both usage and mechanics, the writer inconsistently applies the rules of capitalization, punctuation, usage, spelling, and sentence formation, as specified in the Virginia K-11 SOL. Often, the writing exhibits a lack of control of tense consistency, meaningful punctuation, and the principles of spelling, thus making it difficult for the reader to follow the writer's thought. The density of errors that emerges across features outweighs the feature control present in the paper.

Score 1: The writer demonstrates little or no control of most of the domain's features of usage/mechanics. Frequent and severe errors in usage and mechanics, as specified in the Virginia K-11 SOL, distract the reader and make the writing very hard to understand. Even when meaning is not significantly affected, the density and variety of errors overwhelm the performance and keep it from meeting minimum standards of competence.

Additional
Teacher Resources

Other Activities

Oral Storytelling

Standards of Learning: 7.1 • 8.1 • 9.2 • 10.1

Wish You Well is an oral history. All of us have our own stories to tell, our own oral histories. Have each student tell a partner a story that is personal to him or her. Once each story is told and heard, have the partners write each other's story and share them with the class.

This activity can be used as a pre-reading strategy to introduce what oral storytelling is and how Baldacci has written his book.

Letter Writing

Standards of Learning: 9.6 • 11.8 • 12.7

Have each student choose one character from the novel, and have that character write a letter to another character, discussing some kind of situation or issue connected to what happens in a particular chapter. For example, a student might choose Lou and as Lou, writes a letter to Billy Davis after her fight at school. Remind the students that their main goal in writing these letters is to assume the persona of the character they choose.

Courtroom Drama

Standards of Learning: 8.1 • 10.1 • 11.1 • 12.2

This is a forceful activity to do before students reach the end of the book. Re-enact the courtroom scene. Assign the class specific roles — jury, lawyers and other characters in the scene, judge, observers. Have each lawyer (Cotton Longfellow, Thurston Goode) provide opening statements, providing support from what has already happened in the novel. Have the jury then make a decision as to what should happen to Louisa's land and the children. Then have the students finish reading the novel. Discuss with them how the outcome in the novel was similar or different from what their re-enacted trial predicted. Have each member of the jury turn in a written response regarding his or her opinion of the trial.

Creative Writing

Standard of Learning: 8.5

Have the students go to the New Deal Network Library: http://newdeal.feri.org. Have them click on "Photo Gallery," then scroll down to "Photo Series" (under "Miscellaneous"), then click on "WPA photoessays," then "Haysi, Virginia." (Haysi, Virginia is in Dickenson County where *Wish You Well* is set.) Ask each student to examine the photos of Haysi made in the 1930s, choose one that interests him or her, and print it out. Ask the students to study their pictures and use them as the basis for creating a short story, vignette, short dramatic scene, or poem.

Dramatizing

Standards of Learning: 9.1 • 9.3 • 10.6

After the students have read the novel, divide the class into groups and have each group rewrite a scene (their own choice or assigned) from the book into play form. Once the scripts are completed, have each group present its dramatization to the class.

Character Bone Structure

Standards of Learning: 7.5 • 8.2 • 9.3 • 10.3

This study helps students understand the physical and psychological background / makeup of the novel's characters. Have the students choose a character and then find and copy passages from the book that illustrate all or some of the following:

- **Physiology** — the character's appearance and outward attitude.
  - gender
  - age
  - height & weight
  - color of eyes, hair, and skin
  - posture
  - appearance (dress)
  - defects
  - heredity
- **Sociology** — the character's home location, type of job, family life, financial status, and how he or she spends free time.
  - social class
  - occupation
  - education
  - home life
  - religion
  - place in community
  - political ambitions
  - amusements, hobbies
- **Psychology** — how a character acts because of attitude, the mental state of the character, and reasons for the character's actions due to attitude
  - moral standards
  - personal ambitions
  - frustrations (big and small)
  - temperament
  - attitude towards life
  - complexities
  - extrovert, introvert, or ambivert
  - I.Q.

Making a Quilt

Standard of Learning: 9.2

Instruct each student to interview a family member about his or her family's history. Encourage him or her to tape the interview and then transcribe it on paper. Once the interviews are completed, the class should do one of two activities:

- Create individual "quilts" that reflect each student's family's history by dividing a poster board into even squares and decorating each square with pictures or symbols.
- Create a real quilt that reflects the oral histories of the whole class. This will involve having each student create a quilt block design on a square of paper and then transferring the design to a square of muslin. The muslin blocks are then sewn together with a lattice to create a quilt for the class. Consult local quilters or a quilt shop for ideas that will expedite this project. Ask for help from the school's Family Living (Home Economics) Department.

Once the poster-board "quilts" or the actual quilt is finished, have each student make an oral presentation to the class about his or her family.

Rewriting: Point of View

Standard of Learning: 9.3

Have the students rewrite an incident in *Wish You Well* from another character's point of view.

Comparing Names

Standards of Learning: 8.3 • 9.3

Have the students compare selected passages from *Wish You Well* that reflect the voices of the children in the novel with similar passages from one or more of the following novels: *To Kill a Mockingbird, The Member of the Wedding, Ellen Foster, Catcher in the Rye.*

Looking for Archetypes

Standard of Learning: 10.3

Discuss / define character and situation archetypes. Show students how to search for these in *Wish You Well*. Then have the students locate and note several of these in the novel.

Making Signs

Standard of Learning: 9.6

In *Wish You Well*, David Baldacci provides vivid images of life in the Appalachian mountains. The signs read by Lou indicated that they traveled through Dickens and Tremont and over the McCloud River before reaching the home of Louisa Mae Cardinal. Have the students draw pictures / maps of the area surrounding the Appalachian mountains. Have them separate their maps into thirds and draw "signs" (symbols) in appropriate places to represent the differences each area possesses. (For example, an automobile dealership is found in Dickens. Thus, one could draw an auto dealer sign there.)

Identifying Figurative Language

Standard of Learning: 9.3

When an author uses figurative language, the speech is very vivid. Usually, the author uses similes, metaphors, or personification. Remind students that

- a **simile** is a figure of speech that compares two dissimilar things by using words such as *like*, *as*, or *as if*
- a **metaphor** links two unlike things directly without using words such as *like*, *as*, or *as if*
- **personification** is a technique that gives human attributes to something that is not human.

Have the students find examples of Baldacci's use of figurative language, copy the phrases exactly as they are written in the novel, and then indicate whether each phrase is a metaphor, a simile, or personification. The simile contained in the sentence, "This curious pairing struck Lou as akin to fine pants over filthy boots." is an example that can be provided to students.

Looking for Irony

Standard of Learning: 9.3

Discuss with the students the two types of irony to be found in literature: **situational irony** and **verbal irony**. Situational irony occurs when something happens in the story other than what the reader is led to expect. Verbal irony occurs when there is difference between what people say and what they intend to say. Write this sentence on the board: "The character of Jimmy 'Diamond' Skinner is an example of irony at its best!" Have students validate this statement by finding supporting information from the novel.

Speaking Appalachian

Standard of Learning: 9.4

David Baldacci writes several phrases used by people who lived in the Appalachian region at the time of the story of *Wish You Well*. In order to determine the meaning of these words / phrases, careful attention has to be given to the surrounding words (context clues). Have students find at least ten words or phrases from the novel that are unfamiliar to them. Ask them to use context clues to write definitions. An example to provide to students is *milk fever* —a cow that is heavy with milk. (See the vocabulary strategy "Context Clues and Idiomatic Expressions" on page 85.)

Flora and Fauna Scrapbook

Correlation to the Virginia English Standards of Learning

7.6, 7.10 • 9.4, 9.8 • 10.10 • 12.4

Overview/Activities

Students who have not seen the Appalachian mountains may have difficulty visualizing the setting of *Wish You Well*. Have the students create a scrapbook of the flora and fauna of the area. Working chapter by chapter, the students will compile, individually or as a group activity, a list of plants, birds, and animals mentioned in the book. (See sample list on the blackline master on the next page.) Then, ask them to write a description and provide an illustration of each item on their list.

Guides to birds, flowers, plants, and animals of Appalachia are available in most libraries. A site on Appalachia at http://www.martin.k12.ky.us offers numerous photographs of the area. Some students may prefer to sketch the pictures themselves, while others may want to use copies from books and magazines. Seed catalogs are another source for pictures and information about the flora.

Additional Web Sites

Wild Flowers and Plants of North Carolina
http://NCNatural.com/wildflwr/flowrpg.html

Appalachia by Greg Cruey
http://www.suite101.com/welcome.cfm/appalachia

Archives of Appalachia
http://cass.etsu.edu/archives/index

What is Appalachia?
http://www.civicnet.org/webmarket/appcult2.html

Blackline Master

Flora and Fauna Scrapbook

Flora/Fauna	Description and Illustration
Katydid	
Cricket	
Chuck's-will-widder	
Catfish	
Bass	
Mule	
Vipers	
Rattlesnake	
Hogs	
Cows	
Horses	
Horsemint	
Willow	

Flora/Fauna	Description and Illustration
Broomsedge	
Wild sumac	
Peonies	
Lilac	
Snowball bush	
Wild rose	
Oak	
Pinto beans	
Pole beans	
Corn shocks	
Potatoes	
Tomatoes	
Cedar	
Sycamore tree	

Flora/Fauna	Description and Illustration
Rutabagas	
Collards	
Cucumbers	
Cabbage	
Peppers	
Wild strawberries	
Gooseberries	
Apples	
Sweet potatoes	
Onions	

Music, Reading, and Writing

Correlation to Virginia English Standards of Learning

7.7 • 8.3 • 9.1, 9.3, 9.5 • 10.3, 10.6 • 11.5, 11.6 • 12.5, 12.6

Overview

Music can be a powerful stimulus for some readers. By hearing music that is suggestive of the ideas in a text, some students are better able to focus on the content of the text. The following CDs could prove effective in accompanying the reading of *Wish You Well:*

- *The Music of the Great Smoky Mountains* by Gary Remal Malkin (available from Real Music, 85 Libertyship Way, Suite 207, Sausalito, CA 94965. Phone: 415-331-8273, FAX: 415-331-8278).
- *Appalachian Journey.* Music by Stephen Foster, performed by Yo-Yo Ma, Edgar Meyer, Mark O'Connor, and others. Sony Classics #66782.
- *Appalachia* [sic] *Waltz*. Music by Edgar Meyer and Mark O'Connor, performed by Yo-Yo Ma, Edgar Meyer, and others. Sony Classics #68460.
- *Appalachian Spring* by Aaron Copeland, performed by the New York Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Leonard Bernstein. Sony Classics #63082.

(Note: All CDs are available through Amazon.com and local record shops.)

Activities

1. Many passages in *Wish You Well* describe the beauty of the mountains. Ask several students to locate and prepare a dramatic reading of those passages. During the reading, play in the background selected cuts from one of the CDs above to suggest the aura of the Appalachians.
2. While playing a cut from one of the CDs above, have the students write poems that cover the information in a specified section of the novel. Play the music again while the students read their poems aloud to the class.
3. Play "Settler's Waltz"(cut 10 on the Malkin CD) while the students are reading from chapter 24 the description of the evening Cotton, Diamond, and the others dance the evening away. Invite a dance instructor to the class to teach the students to waltz. Locate books in the library that provide directions for traditional American folk dances that can be tried. Hold a class discussion comparing the dances of mountain culture to popular dancing of today.
4. Ask students with strong musical backgrounds to compose an original selection that is reminiscent of Appalachian music, or ask them to learn and play selections from popular mountain music. (Music teachers may be able to help the students locate appropriate music.)
5. As the students listen to one of the CDs above, ask them to locate specific passages from the novel that "go along with" the music. Ask them to explain why the music and the passages seem to go together. Then, ask them to write about the meaning and/or importance of their selected passages.

An Oral History Project
A Process

Overview

A class oral history project can be a powerful experience for a class of students because the entire class participates in a process to write a work of historical fiction. Here is a suggested sequence for such a project; however, experience might suggest a different approach.

To carry out the project, the teacher may do the following:

1. Research oral history and historical fiction writing (e.g., that of Eliot Wigginton, Ben Brunwin, Will Hobbs). (See the list of oral history resources on page 130.)
2. Meet with students to explain the concept of the project, share ideas, and set goals.
3. Plan the schedule/calendar.
4. Create rubrics for assessment.
5. Research and write story lines. Visiting a local historical society and/or examining a book such as Virginius Dabney's *Richmond: The Story of a City* may be helpful at this point. (See sample story lines on the next page.)
6. Verify access to journals and other types of oral history research.
7. Present story lines to students, and reach consensus on one. (See blackline master on page 126.)
8. Have the students study the art of creating an oral history through a study of a novel such as David Baldacci's *Wish You Well*.
9. Plan a field trip to three sites: two for conducting research and the third for visiting the site of the chosen story line.
10. Have the students do preliminary research on the story and present the results.
11. Recruit an outside expert to become a part of the project by giving information/advice to the class.
12. Help the students reach consensus on the point of view, main characters, conflict, and chapter contents.
13. Divide up further research responsibilities, creating two research teams.
14. Go on the field trip, and have each research team conduct research at one of the two sites; have everyone gather at the site of the setting of their novel.
15. Review with the class the art of writing novels. Have them go to David Baldacci's Web site (http://www.david-baldacci.com) for a chat with the author and to discover how he tackles his novels.
16. Have the students compose plot outlines for each chapter, merging oral history with fiction.
17. Assist the students in developing character maps for each main character. Discuss the maps. Reach consensus for each chapter.
18. Assign artwork (optional).
19. Have the students write first drafts of the chapters, using a writing workshop format. Show them the example of the beginning of a possible first chapter based on Sample Story Line 1 (See page 129).
20. Have the students peer-edit the drafts and then correct and unify their chapters.
21. Have the students revise their drafts.
22. Have the students type the revised drafts in writing lab.
23. Share the chapters by conducting a read-aloud; critique artwork.
24. Have the students rewrite according to consensus of the whole class.
25. Ensure that the students create smooth transitions between chapters.
26. Finalize the revisions.
27. Have the students publish their chapters in uniform format and assemble all into a book.
28. Assess the students' contributions to the project. (See blackline masters on pages 127 and 128.)
29. Celebrate with an authors' tea.
30. Assess the project.

An Oral History Project
Two Sample Story Lines

The Tunnel Collapse of 1925 — The Lost Train

This story takes place on Church Hill in Richmond, Virginia, on October 2, 1925. On this date, a tunnel collapsed, a train was buried, and four people were reported killed. However, to this day people who were there claim that many more were killed. When the accident occurred, hundreds of men were busy rehabilitating the very old tunnel. Men could hear the sounds of the train switching flat cars about 100 feet inside the tunnel. Then, bricks started falling from the roof and the horrible crackling sound of the roof caving in was heard. Some managed to scurry to safety, but many were trapped. Most eventually escaped, but some were buried and had to crawl to freedom. The engineer, Tom Mason, was later found dead, pinned in an upright position at the lever. Due to the danger of further cave-ins, the entrances were sealed. To this day, one end of the tunnel is completely filled in, but the other end has partial access. The locomotive remains buried under Jefferson Park Hill, where a bank was built (Maurice Duke and Daniel P. Jordan, editors, *A Richmond Reader, 1733-1983* [Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1983] 186–191).

A Civil War Spy: Miss Elizabeth Van Lew

This story is set in Richmond, Virginia, during the Civil War, when many Union sympathizers were tried and hanged for spying. However, one person, Miss Elizabeth Van Lew, was never caught. This intelligent, tenacious woman was able to get Mary Elizabeth Bowser, a free black, onto the staff at the Confederate White House, where much information was obtained and transmitted. General Grant once wrote to Bowser that she had sent more valuable information than anyone else had. Although it was never confirmed, even in her diary, many historians give her credit for aiding the escape of 109 Union prisoners from Libby Prison. Behaving and dressing in a rather bizarre manner, people thought she was crazy but harmless; thus, she was able to make daily visits to the prison. In 1863, thousands of Union prisoners were taken to Danville, Virginia. Union Colonel Ulrich Dahlgren was sent to free the remaining prisoners in March 1864. He marched down River Road outside of Richmond, and at Cary Street Road he was met by 300 men from the Home Guard. Dahlgren was headed off and had to retreat to Tidewater, where he was killed. A mysterious order was found on his body: “Richmond must be destroyed and Jeff Davis and his cabinet killed.” Confederates secretly buried Dahlgren in Oakwood Cemetery, but Miss Van Lew’s agents discovered the grave. They dug up the body and took it to the home of Robert Orrock in Henrico County outside of Richmond, where it remained until after the war. Then it was exhumed again and moved to the Dahlgren family plot in Philadelphia (Virginius Dabney, *Richmond: The Story of a City*, [Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1990] 181–184).

Blackline Master

Evaluation of Your Chosen Story Line

Directions: Now that you have read each of the proposed story lines, it is time to cast your vote. Choose the story line that you like best and evaluate your choice according to these 6 criteria. Assign 1 to 5 points (1 = low; 5 = high) for each criterion that is met by your chosen story line. Justify why you assigned these points.

My chosen story line: _____

Location (Setting)	**Time and Scope (Setting)**
Points _____ Description Justification for score	Points _____ Historical accuracy Justification for score
Conflict	**Plot Development**
Points _____ Relates to protagonist Justification for score	Points _____ Easy to visualize Historical accuracy Justification for score
Characters (Fictional)	**Characters (Historical)**
Points _____ Interrelationship with historical figure(s) Point of view Justification for score	Points _____ Interrelationship with fictional characters Historical accuracy Justification for score

Total points _____

Blackline Master

Peer Evaluation of Your Chapter

Directions: Evaluate your partner's part of the chapter according to these eight criteria. Assign 3 to 12 points (3 = low; 12 = high) for each criterion. Justify how your partner earned your assigned points. Discuss your results with your partner.

Location (Setting)	**Time and Scope (Setting)**
Points _____ Description Elaboration Justification for score	Points _____ Specifically stated Historical accuracy Justification for score
Conflict	**Plot Development**
Points _____ Development Relates to protagonist Justification for score	Points _____ Development Historical accuracy Justification for score
Characters (Fictional)	**Characters (Historical)**
Points _____ Development Interrelationship with historical figures Justification for score	Points _____ Development Interrelationship with fictional characters Historical accuracy Justification for score
Written Expression	**Usage/Mechanics**
Points _____ Point of view Style Vocabulary (suitability to characters and time period) Justification for score	Points _____ Sentence structure Punctuation Spelling Justification for score

Total points _____

Blackline Master

Evaluation of Your Contribution to the Class Novel

Directions: Evaluate your contribution to the class novel according to the following rubric.

Criteria	Your Points	Teacher's Points
1. Your contribution to the research used in the novel (20 points)		
2. Your willingness to continue revising and editing until the chapter was complete (20 points)		
3. Your cooperation with your group and teacher (20 points)		
4. Your observance of the elements of historical fiction (20 points) • Plot development • Setting • Point of view • Characterization • Historical interaction		
5. Your mastery of the writing domains (20 points) • Composing (7 points) • Written Expression (7 points) • Usage/Mechanics (6 points)		
Total points		

Comments:

An Oral History Project
An Example Based on Sample Story Line 1

THE CHURCH HILL TRAGEDY

Chapter One: "Bad Dreams" (excerpt)

"AAAAAAAHHHHHHH!" I jerked up from my fitful nightmare, cold sweat pouring from my face. Sitting up, I rubbed my sleepy eyes and yawned. "Gee," I thought, "that was one weird dream!" I looked out of my window at the cold, dreary morning. "Rain again? This is the third day it has rained!" I picked up my diary and began to write.

> Entry #56
> 10/2/25
>
> It looks as if it's going to be another one of those days again. It's raining and cold, so I can't go out and play. I wish the rain would stop. I hate rain in October! Pappa and I were going to play catch after school today, but now we can't because it will be too muddy. Last night I had the scariest dream ever!!! I was all alone in the middle of a crowd and all of a sudden everything began to get black! It didn't happen gradually—blackness surrounded me all at once. It was like I was locked up in a closet or really, really deep under the sea. The scariest part about my dream was that there was no way out! I screamed and yelled for Pappa or Mama to come and help me, but they couldn't hear me. I couldn't breathe, and then I wasn't able to see or feel anything. I just can't stop thinking about it. It was so real that I know I was there. That was the strangest dream I've ever had. Maybe it means that Claude, my brother-in-law, will kid around with me and push me in the closet and not let me out until Mama yells at him. He always does that, and I hate it! Even though she's my sister, I'm still worried about Sissy. She's having her tonsils taken out today at three o'clock. It's harder for a twelve-year-old to have her tonsils out than just a little kid. I know she's scared. She has to stay overnight and is going to be put to sleep with ether! Mama's going to take her to St. Luke's Hospital after breakfast and then stay to see that Sissy is all right. Whenever Mama is around, everything always seems to turn out okay, so I guess I don't have to worry so much. Well, I have to go if I want to wish her well.

I closed my journal and walked out my bedroom door. When I reached the top of the stairs, I saw a light on in the kitchen. I could smell the bacon cooking on the stove, so it looked as if I weren't the first one up on the day of Sissy's tonsillectomy.

Oral History Internet Resources

General Resources

Oral History Association Guidelines
http://www.dickinson.edu/organizations/oha/EvaluationGuidelines.html

Indiana University Oral History Research Center
http://www.indiana.edu/~ohrc/bibliogr.htm

Oral History Research Office at Columbia University
http://www.cc.columbia.edu/cu/libraries/indiv/oral/

UC Berkley Regional Oral History Office
http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/BANC/ROHO/

Baylor University Institute for Oral History
http://www.baylor.edu/~Oral_History/Introduction.html

Online Oral History Projects

Library of Congress American Memory Project
http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/finder.html

American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers Project, 1936-1940
http://lcweb2.loc.gov/wpaintro/wpahome.html

Virginia Projects

The Bland County History Archives, maintained by the students of Rocky Gap High School in Rocky Gap, Virginia, consist of more than 200 oral interviews, as well as hundreds of photographs, maps, cemetery catalogues, and other artifacts. The collection is housed in the former Honaker Church, the oldest building in Rocky Gap. The holdings are continuously being expanded. The goal of the archives is to preserve the stories of the people of Bland County and present them to the public in a variety of ways. Many of the stories are the stories of the last people to have been born and raised in real log cabins back up a holler or on top of a mountain. These are the unique stories of Appalachia as told by its people. (Reprinted from site.)
http://www.bland.k12.va.us/bland/rocky/gap.html
or
http://www.bland.k12.va.us and click on “Bland County History Archives”

Black Women at Virginia Tech Oral History Project
http://spec.lib.vt.edu/blackwom/

Reston Reflections Oral History Archive — The Langston Hughes Middle School Project
http://www.gmu.edu/library/specialcollections/pcaoral.html

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